

DEVELOPING CHURCH BASED LEADERS TO  
ASSIST IN MEETING THE UNMET NEEDS  
OF THE COMMUNITY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **DEVELOPING CHURCH BASED LEADERS TO ASSIST IN MEETING THE UNMET NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY**

by

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The context of this project is Lomax Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ), Detroit Michigan. This church had a history of strong leaders but now like the city, is in decline and the community surrounding the church is a reflection of needs going unmet. The hypothesis is if the leadership is empowered through an understanding of the importance and impact of biblical leadership it will result in a change within the individual and local church and the environment surrounding the church. The methodology used was a mixture of sermons, and Bible studies. The goals of the project were accomplished.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

No work is the completion of one individual, but a collection of people who made contributions in different ways throughout my life's journey, which is a reflection of this work. I am deeply grateful to my parents, William and Janet Relford for their sacrifices made. Both of whom envisioned educational advancement beyond High School for me and my eight siblings. Because they planted a seed in me before I could walk and talk; I am able to complete this doctoral work.

I also would like to acknowledge the leaders that God had placed in my life at a critical turning point when my life could have gone in another direction. These persons nurtured, coached and encouraged me. My life shall forever be changed: Dr. Dennis Proctor, my father in the ministry and pastor during my adolescent year. The late Brenda Robinson, the first African American High school educator who encouraged me to go into education. Reverend Juanita Allen, my work study advisor at Livingstone College. She helped me elevate my writing to a college level. She also encouraged me with scriptures. Reverend Allen gave me a Living Bible, a translation I could understand and would read from Genesis to Revelations.

I thank God for the mentors I have had throughout this Doctor of Ministry journey. Dr. Kenneth Marcus and Dr. Connie Carter. Dr. Keith Lawrence, you made a believer out of me. These mentors were my pastors throughout this process. I never would have completed the program without their navigating the way. I truly understand the emphasis placed on mentors and their mentorship toward me.

Much love to mentorship group, Effective Leadership and Prophetic Preaching For The 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This group of men and women had no history with me but we have grown to become like family. We have shared the ups and downs of our lives with one another and have grown as ministers of the Gospel.

Lastly, I am grateful for the church where I serve as pastor, Lomax Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion church in Detroit, Michigan. Your prayers throughout this journey have been appreciated. Your encouragement and ministry to your pastor has not gone unnoticed. I especially like to thank you for sharing me and freeing me up to complete this project. These last four months have been a challenge but you allowed me to step away from some of my pastoral responsibilities so I could complete this work. Lomax, thank you for your sacrifice.

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to my children and wife. To my children, Brian Jr., Rachel and Sarai. All three of you are in college at the same time as I have completed this work. My choosing to go back to school may not have been the best timing however, you have been supportive throughout the process. You have encouraged me by your academic achievements. If ever I thought about quitting the thought of you has motivated me to stay the course and finish what I started. My love for the three of you is truly beyond words.

Lastly, to my wife Patrice of twenty-seven years at the time of completing this work; Patrice, you are the reason I went into the Doctor of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary. I had talked about it for years, but you said, “Stop talking about it and just do it.” I tried to come up with every excuse why it was not feasible to go back. But you came up with all the reasons it was necessary and three and half years later, “look at God.” You have always pushed me to further and be the best at what I do. This experience has proven to be no different. These pages have your scent on them because of the significant contribution you have made to the process. The proof reading, rewriting, the researching, the staying up late and early rising. I would not be where I am and who I am without you. I thank God every day for bringing you into my life.

## INTRODUCTION

Lomax Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is a proud church with a rich history of strong leadership within the church and community. This congregation built a new building from the ground up in 1968. This physical plant, at one time was one of the only AME Zion Church with the capacity to house a head start and a daycare program at the same time. In her heyday, Lomax boasted of a membership that was over one thousand members. However, presently, Lomax finds herself in a state of decline and serving beneath her capacity. This means that needs that the community has go unmet by this congregation.

Leadership has been identified as the problem in this context. The primary object of this project is to develop a model to address developing or empowering church based leaders to meet the unmet needs of the community. This will be accomplished by educating leaders on biblical leadership and how God calls people to lead that see themselves as inadequate to lead but God still calls them. It is the hope of this project that leaders in the church can become better leaders by studying biblical leaders and the challenges each had to overcome. It is the intent of the implementation aspect of the project to resist the temptation of glamorizing the biblical leaders being study but to show them in their humanness and struggle to do what God had called them to do. By engaging in this study the leadership of this local congregation will be empowered and changed.



Chapter one is about my spiritual autobiography or journey. It addresses my spiritual formation in relationship to Jesus Christ. The victories and failures are revisited and the pivotal people God has placed in my life to provide leadership and development highlighted because spiritually I am who because of those who have poured into my life at a time when I perhaps doubted myself. This chapter also addresses the context for this project, Lomax Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AME Zion), in Detroit Michigan.

Chapter two is the biblical foundations aspect of this work. This chapter sets the biblical framework on which the foundation of this project stands upon. This chapter engages two biblical leaders and the apprehension each that each struggle with in becoming a leader. The Old Testament focuses on Gideon in Judges 6:11-18. The New Testament emphasis is on Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-7. Both Gideon and Paul are called by God to leadership and both have their own reasons for what they see as reasons for disqualification from leadership but both situations God chooses who he wants to use.

Chapter three the historical foundations chapter highlights Harry Hosier a slave from the 19<sup>th</sup> century who could not read or write. “Black Harry” is what some people called him. Has an amazing story of God elevating him to preach not only before slaves but white congregations in the Methodist Church. When taking into consideration of the times and low regard for people of African ancestry, makes Harry Hosier leadership that much more impressive. This story is amazing to see how God uses for leadership whomever he choose slave or free.

Chapter four is the theological foundation emphasis. This particular chapter examines the theology of leadership. The intent of this chapter is to share what leadership looks like from a biblical perspective. Leadership in the context of the church is different than leadership in other organizations.

Chapter five is the theoretical focus of the project. This section will examine leadership theories that come from other fields of study such as psychology, and education and business. This chapter will also look at the Servant Leadership, by Robert Greenleaf, as a model for leadership within the context of the church.

Chapter six shares the fieldwork of this project. The implementation of the project is expressed in this final chapter. This project on developing church based leadership to assist in meeting then unmet needs of the community is tested and analyzed in this chapter. The results are shared. This chapter covers a critical summary reflection of the overall project as well as the conclusion of this work.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

Most African Americans living in Detroit are here because previous generation made a conscience decision to leave the south and come to the north for a better life. Detroit was a place that promised employment; as a matter of fact Henry Ford encouraged blacks to leave the south and come to work in Detroit. At one point Ford paid \$5.00 a day, which is was more than most companies were paying, as an incentive to get more workers so he could enhance production. Detroit was known for industry. “In 1925 Detroit had three thousand major manufacturing plants, thirty-seven automobile manufacturing plants and two hundred and fifty automotive accessory manufacturing plants.<sup>1</sup> People came to Detroit for one reason, to work. They were trained to do certain jobs and were compensated for it. Workers were not required to have a high school diploma. The only thing needed was a willingness to work. The success of the auto industry is what drew so many immigrants to this area. Detroit once represented the fastest growing middle class in America.

The growth of the city was also reflected in the churches. “Before 1916 there were only nine Black churches in Detroit. African American Methodism was the largest denomination and Baptist was the second largest.”<sup>2</sup> Today there are over five thousand

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<sup>1</sup> University of Michigan Education, accessed August 4, 2016, [Bentley.umich.edu/ research/ publication/migrations](http://Bentley.umich.edu/research/publication/migrations).

<sup>2</sup> University of Michigan Education.

churches in the city. It is posited that the growth of the city had a great impact on the growth of the church.

One of the threads or connections between the spiritual autobiography and the context paper is regarding education. During Brian's high school years, his grades were very poor. What was not said in the spiritual autobiography was when he finished high school his GPA was a 1.5. Central Catholic High School ranked students based on their GPA. Out of 209 total students Brian was rank 197, which means there were only twelve people who had a lower GPA than his. The academic piece began to turning when he received tutoring from a teacher in high school. This experience of academic success, help create confidence in his ability. This happened because a teacher cared enough to do something to help him help himself.

The summer enrichment program Brian worked and was a part of was called Begin-A-New. This program was all about education. It provided tutoring for students in elementary, middle and high school. The focus was reading, writing and arithmetic. The philosophy of the program was very simple, learning could not have a summer vacation, many students were not on grade level and needed the summer to catch up and be on grade level when school resumed. The summer program allowed Brian to connect with college students who were the tutors of the program. He was not only conversing but was working with college students and gleaning from them about college life. Looking back over the more than five years of working the summers at Begin-A-New, Brian went from being a custodian to being a tutor to running the program in 1989. Begin-A-New provided him with an opportunity to begin life anew.

Another connection that helped to move Brian in the direction of education was his job at Churches Chicken. There was a serious dislike for this job. The daily routine of panning chicken in a walk-in freezer, which was very cold, then frying chicken next to three deep fryers with a temperature of 450 degrees. There was never a place of satisfaction. It was either too cold or too hot. Laughing and partying with the people on the job was one thing, but staying in something that a person disliked was all the motivation needed to make a change. It was Brian's dislike for what he was doing that caused him to see a better future that was much different from the reality he was facing. There was a refusal to believe or accept that frying chicken is all there was to accomplish in a life time. The belief that a person is better than the reality he or she is facing. The dislike for the job and the thought that this could be all that was achieved was enough motivation to bring about a change. In a huge way, education was pursued because of the fear of what life might be without it. Churches Chicken was a great game changer.

The people that mentored and provided valuable navigation when it was needed the most were people who had graduated from college. They knew that if they wanted a greater quality of life, an education was necessary. Brenda Robinson (Mrs. Rob) had a Masters Degree in secondary education and was the only Black teacher at Washington High School. Mrs. Rob was the best friend with my mother. She started a group called the Success Club for Black students who attended Washington High School. She would take the students on a Black college tour every year. Most student never would have know about these colleges had it not been for Mrs. Rob and the Black college tour. Mrs. Rob was a graduate of Virginia Union University, which is a historically Black institution.

Reverend Proctor was an advocate for education as well. Proctor provided educational guidance for pivotal points in Brian's life. Most young people who attended St. James in Massillon, Ohio, Brian's home church, went to college. Several of them went to Livingstone as he did because of Proctor. Proctor was responsible for many young people in the area attending a historically Black institution.

Brian's undergraduate degree was in elementary education. There was a desire at one point to become a president of a historically Black institution, where the people who attend are predominately African Americans.

As the pastor of Logan Temple Church in Knoxville Tennessee, an educational building was built to fulfill the need for classroom space. Immediately after completing the building, a summer enrichment program was started called Begin-A-New. The hope was for this program to do for young people what a similar program did for Brian.

Lomax Temple AME Zion Church in Detroit, Michigan does not place significant emphasis on education like churches during Brian's youth; consequently, the church has not made an impact in the educational life of children and youth who desperately need it. According to the census there are a total of 442,002 persons in the city of Detroit that are twenty-five years and older. Of this number the educational level and achievement is as follows: 99,961 or 22.6% have less than a high school diploma, the state level is 11.2%; 145,077 have a high school diploma, this represents 32.8% of the population and the state level is 30.9%; some college or associates degree 144,017 which is 32.5% of the population and the state level is 32.5%; bachelors degree 31,071 which is a reflection of

7% of the population and the state is 15.5%; masters, doctorate, or professional degree 21,878 of the population which is 4.9% of the population and the state level is 9.6%.<sup>3</sup>

With these startling statistics, it is clear that there is a great need in this larger context for education. The concentration of this need as it relates to who, what, when where and how, are uncertain at this time but there is absolutely a need.

One of the sad realities for the city of Detroit is that many Blacks came from the South to Detroit during the first great migration 1920's and the second great migration in the 1940's and 1950's. Detroit was a city of manufacturing industries and jobs were plentiful. People could make a living for themselves and their family. In those days, a person could get a job without a high school education. A person could keep the same job the duration of his or her working lifetime. However, jobs in the city are no longer abundant and not having an education is no longer the order of the day. Dropping out of high school and going to work in a factory and making good money is no longer possible.

Somehow the church must play a vital role in changing the educational dynamics in the city. Otherwise, people will not be able to work and take care of themselves and their families. People originally came to Detroit for employment in factories and a better life but now the church has to help educate people for other jobs that may require higher skill levels and/or education.

Another connection between Brian's spiritual autobiography and his context was an understanding of pain and overcoming matters that appear to be larger than life. The spiritual autobiography highlighted two instances of dealing with personal pain. The first was a situation of infidelity in my parent's relationship. My father had been unfaithful to

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<sup>3</sup> USA.Com Detroit Michigan Population and Races, accessed August 4, 2016, <http://www.usa.com/detroit-mi-population-and-races.htm>.

my mother. He had been involved with a woman that went to same church as our family. My mother somehow was made aware of this situation. One day she told me to ride with her. I was about sixteen at the time. She drove to the woman's house where allegedly my father had spent the night. My mother told me to go to the door and ring the doorbell and to ask if my father was there. I did as my mother asked. The woman said, "No, he was not there." I watched my mother cry like I had never seen her cry before and this experience left a lasting impression on my life. My parents ultimately survived the infidelity, a situation that brings destruction to many couples. Their marriage is stronger and better because of the ordeal. I admire and have the upmost respect for them.

I had not thought about this incident for a long time. It was during the October peer group session that a question was asked of me that caused me to reflect deeply. The question was why did my mother ask me to go with her. A person in the group offered that God knew that I would be a person who would be called upon to deal with the pain of other people; therefore, God allowed me to see my mother's pain.

Brian has never taken delight watching others endure pain of any kind. He has always been against pain as a way of life. He wanted to be used to resolve painful situation.

Struggle occurred when Brian's father was laid-off from work two or three times, when he was younger, and his family had to receive governmental assistance or food stamps. One of the over arching themes of Brian's life was being faced with things that seem bigger than the person going through the situation and overcoming what seemed insurmountable. Brian's father is a great example of someone who was constantly confronted with challenges that were bigger than him. He came into fatherhood at a



young age and had a large family but none of that stopped him from doing whatever he had to do to take care of his family. One of the jobs Brian's dad had was lifting beef in a refrigerated plant. He would carry a half side of beef repeatedly until a truck was loaded. He could have given up but he did not because working this job is how he took care of the family.

Brian's mother was the creative genius of the household. She would constantly deal with not having enough food to feed nine children. She was known for stretching what she had to the point that all were fed and their stomachs were full. It was not always what the children wanted to eat, but there was never a day when anyone went to sleep hungry. Brian thought spaghetti was made with tomato paste but his mother used tomato paste to stretch the meal. She would make pancakes the size of a skillet. Brian and his brother's loved the big pancakes and thought it was a special treat. However, his mother only did this to make sure the children had enough to eat. More times than not when the family was faced with large challenges the children were not aware because of how Brian's parents handled their affairs.

When Brian became a dad at twenty-two years old like his father, he knew that this would be a difficult challenge in his life. He was a junior in college with no money, no job and a wife and child to take care of. Instead of giving up, he finished college and went to graduate school and graduated with a Master's degree. He learned at an early age that you have to persevere in order to achieve your goals and not allow difficult challenges to defeat you; challenges will come to everyone.

Lomax Temple Church is in a difficult situation. A once thriving membership with over 1,000 The membership which once was thriving with over one thousand back

in the 1950's and 1960's now have on average about 160 in attendance on a Sunday morning. The vast majority of the congregation lived within the community. The members walked to and from church. However, today the majority of the congregations lives outside the church community and conduct very little business within a one-mile radius of the church. The city of Detroit once boasted of a population of two million and was considered the fourth largest city in the United States of America. The present population is just over 700,000 and the church membership is a reflection of what is noticeable in the context at large. Decline in the city has also equated to a decline in the local church. Lomax still has to maintain the church that was built in 1967 with a seating capacity of 750 and educational building with several classrooms, not to mention this local church's financial responsibilities to the larger hierarchical structure which includes district, annual and general conference obligations.

In December 2013, a judge ruled in favor of the city's Emergency Financial Manager's filing for bankruptcy for the city. This was a historic ruling because never has a city the size of Detroit ever filed for chapter 9 bankruptcy. This judgment made it legal to tax the pensions of city workers. How much of the pensions can be tax was not clear but the issue of taxing retirees money that was put away for the years when they need it most is a done deal. There are several city workers that are retirees in the membership of this local church who are affected by this change. This will be another hit to the economic base of this church.

Brian's parents have taught him the importance of creativity and perseverance. From his father's hard work to his mother's creativity to stretch food and his ability to

overcome challenges of his own have made him the right person for this kind of work that the city and the church are facing.

Brian worked with the Tennessee Conference Community Development Corporation (TCCD) when he lived in Knoxville, Tennessee. While working there he gained valuable skills that he will use where ever needed. TCCD was not an existing development company. Brian worked along with others to create this entity that worked on behalf of thirty-five other AME Zion churches to receive grant dollars to address issues. The local churches of the Tennessee Annual Conference were not able to achieve the level of ministry they wanted to on their own so they partnered together. They started TCCD so that funds for ministry that meets the needs of people might be actualized. TCCD would seek the funding for projects that were almost impossible for any local churches to do on their own. Funds would be directed to local congregations that had a desire and need for certain ministries in their neighborhood. Funds were earmarked for programs that were in the summer to help local congregations do educational types of ministries. Also to help people qualify for affordable housing. This program provided classes for financial management and debt elimination for all persons seeking housing. Those who successfully completed the program were given subsidized funding. Partnerships were established with banks, credit unions, the city of Knoxville and Knox County.

With all of the experiences Brian has faced in his life, he believes that he has what is needed to turn not only Lomax around but also the community that Lomax is a part of. Never realizing all that he has gone through would later help him to help others overcome

their challenges. The synergy of pastor and context has allowed Brian to look back and see how he overcame to believe that others in similar circumstances could do the same.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

“The local church is the hope of the world and its future rests primarily in the hands of leaders.”<sup>1</sup> Leadership has always been an integral part and a determining factor in the success of every organization secular: (business, education, government, politics etc.) or religious. Leadership is critical when it comes to the impact a local church has in a community.

Lomax Temple AME Zion Church is a congregation in the city of Detroit Michigan. A number of problems surrounding this congregation range from educational disparities, housing, safety, and jobs to name a few. The major focus of our congregation is on maintaining the church building and contributing funds to meet the needs of the church’s parent organization; very little takes place to address the unmet needs in our community.

In order for the church to begin addressing many of the unmet needs of the community, it must equip itself with principles contained in the Bible. When the church uses the Bible to assist its members in solving problems, members can find the strength to support the community in meeting its unmet needs. This chapter will identify how problems were solved in the Bible, and then used these methods to build a process to solve problems in the church and the community. For our purposes, the Old Testament text used to solve the church and community problems will be Judges 6:11-16 and the

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<sup>1</sup> Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2002), 27.

New Testament text will be 1 Corinthians 15:3-7. In these two texts, Gideon and Paul are used by God to solve problems.

How people view themselves determine the extent they will allow God to use them as instruments of problem solving. It is the personal perception of oneself that becomes the major obstacle for doing what needs to be done to change a situation. What a person sees or does not see in him or herself is what causes doubt in their ability. A negative opinion of self limits a person's ability to change their situation.

According to the Bible, Gideon and Paul struggled with doing the will of God. They both had a pessimistic perception of themselves. This chapter will examine why they felt insignificant when it came to doing the will of God. Secondly, this chapter will examine the context that Gideon and Paul were required to address. According to the biblical text, Gideon and Paul were hesitant to do the will of God because they perceived their ability inadequate for the task. Gideon and Paul's plight was similar to the spies that Moses sent out to do an assessment of the land of Canaan. When they saw the enemy and how big they were in stature, they said of themselves, "We are grasshoppers in their sight." They saw themselves as small and insignificant because what they saw in the land was more than their personal ability could handle.

Internal tension and struggle is always present when a task seems greater than a person's ability to accomplish it. More often, it is what an individual does not see in himself or herself that causes him or her to doubt that God can use them to accomplish great things. The individual sees the problem and that something needs to be done, but because the issue seems so vast, the assumption is that someone else more qualified is needed. When problems seem greater than a person's perceived ability, instead of doing

something, more times than not, they do nothing. Such was the case for Gideon and Paul when they allowed God to move in them and through them.

Lastly, this chapter will examine the difference that God makes in determining positive outcomes, and how God helps persons overcome inferior views of themselves. The issue is not how enormous a situation is or how unqualified an individual is in reversing things, but how God's presence is the game changer. Yes, Gideon and Paul were able to impact their situation in a positive way because God was with them and they did not have to rely totally on their own ability. When God calls someone to do something for him, he does not leave them to do it on their own (1 Sm 16:18).

The deciding factor for Gideon and Paul was their acceptance of God's call knowing that God was with them, and therefore, victory was not only achievable, but also believable. Perhaps the challenge for so many is attempting to tackle a task on their own and without the help of the Lord. For Gideon and Paul, both situations were seen as insurmountable. Gideon had to deal with the Midianites, but for Paul, God used him as the vessel to bring the gospel to the Gentiles in spite of his past deeds. A positive outcome was inconceivable if left up to either of them. Both situations were unachievable on one's own but because of the call of God and the presence of God what each could not do on his own was doable with the help of the almighty God.

### **Old Testament**

The book of Judges begins with the continuation of the conquest of the land of Canaan. Joshua is said to be dead in chapter one but the writer of Judges gives an assessment of the condition of Israel during his life span. Judges 2:7 says, "And the

people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of elders the who had outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work which the Lord had done for Israel.”<sup>2</sup> However, after Joshua’s death and the death of the elders who served under him, “there arose another generation after them, who knew not the Lord or the work which he done in Israel” (Jgs 2:7). Things change very quickly for the people of God and their relationship with the Lord. The new generation has no awareness of God and no recollection of God’s history with Israel. Because of this, “the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baal; and they forsook the Lord the God of their fathers... They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples around them and bowed down to them...” (Jgs 2:7). This is a consistent pattern in the book of Judges. The people do what is “evil in the sight of the Lord” and the Lord delivers them into the hands of an enemy who would oppress them. It is while under oppression the people cry out to God, and he sends a Judge to deliver them. This is the cycle of the book of Judges.

Gideon comes on the scene in a culture and climate that is considered a dark period in the life of Israel, when “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Jgs 2:7). They did not do what was right in God’s eyes but their own eyes, which suggested a time in Israel’s history when people chose to do what they decided what was right and not the Lord.

Gideon comes into leadership during a time when the Lord delivered Israel into the hands of the Mideanites for seven years. The Mideanites along with the “Amalekites and the sons of the east” would come into the land of Israel and “destroy the produce of the earth ... and leave no sustenance in Israel as well as no sheep, ox or donkey ... they

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<sup>2</sup> Judges 2:7 Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references are from the RSV.



would come in like locusts” and destroy everything Israel had to sustain herself. The Mideanites are the descendants of Abraham and his wife Keturah. In the book of Jasher, which is mentioned in the Bible though it is not a part of canonical books of the Bible, says in chapter 25:1 “Abraham took a wife in his old age, and her name was Keturah, from the land of Canaan.” Keturah, being from the land of Canaan, would make her a descendent of Ham because Canaan is the fourth son of Ham. Genesis 25:1-3 says of Keturah, “And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.” Midian was the fourth son and the father of the Midianites. Moses’ father in-law, Jethro was the priest of Midian.

The Mideanites are compared to locusts in Judges 6:5. Locusts were known for causing great devastation. “No walls can stop them; no ditches arrest them; fires kindled in their path are forthwith extinguished by the myriads of their dead, ... if a door or window be open, they enter and destroy everything of wood in the house. Every terrace, court and inner chamber is filled with them in moments.”<sup>3</sup> They strip everything green, and every tree till everything is barren. The Midianites, who come into the land of Israel on camels, have the effect on the land as locust. There is nothing left for the people God. Gideon, the sixth Judge, comes on the scene during a difficult and hard time. The word Judge in Hebrew means to defend.<sup>4</sup> Gideon arrives during a time of dire circumstance and server poverty.” Gideon’s leadership is summoned when Israel is in distress as well as during a time of recession.

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<sup>3</sup> Easton Study Bible, “Locust,” accessed June 8, 2016, [http://www. studylight .org/ dict ionaries/ehd/](http://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/ehd/).

<sup>4</sup> James Strong, “Judge,” *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance to the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), H1117.

It is into this environment that “the angel of the Lord comes to Gideon, whose name means cutter down or hewer,”<sup>5</sup> while he is sitting under an oak tree at Orphrah. In verse 12, the angel of the Lord not only greets Gideon but also calls him “a mighty man of valor.” The word *mighty* in Hebrew is *gibbow*, it is an adjective which means strong, brave, mighty and impetuous. It is used of a hunter, commonly of an impetuous soldier, a hero.<sup>6</sup> The word *valor* in Hebrew is *chayil*. It is a masculine noun, the meaning of which is strength, might, efficiency, wealth, army, force, ability, and power might (especially warlike).<sup>7</sup> The angel speaks things about Gideon that was admirable and impressive. According to the angel, Gideon is the leader fit for the task. God always seems to see in a person what he or she does not see in him or herself. The angel of the Lord calls Gideon “mighty man of valour” before he had become a mighty man of valor. God called Abram the “father of many nations” before he had one child. God also called Cephas a “rock” before he exemplified any real qualities of stability. The angel of the Lord speaks what will become and what is.

The contrast to what the angel says about Gideon is the reality of where Gideon is and what he is doing. Judges 6:11 says that Gideon is “...threshing wheat in the wine press.” This does not seem problematic but the correct place to thresh wheat is not in the winepress where grapes and olives are pressed. According to the Anchor Bible, wheat is threshed out in the open, not in the mountains, in dens, caves and strongholds, which is where Gideon finds himself. He is threshing wheat; he is beating out the grain from the stalks with a stick. He is performing the task of an ox. The text says Gideon is threshing

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<sup>5</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, H1439.

<sup>6</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, H1368.

<sup>7</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, H2428.

wheat in the winepress and doing the work of an ox or a servant to hide from the Midianites (Jgs 6:11). Gideon is not demonstrating strength, bravery, or power. He does not seem like a warrior, let alone a hero. Gideon seems frightened by his situation and he is hiding so that he can preserve his own life.

Gideon's response to being told, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor" is a statement of disbelief and doubt. In verse 13, Gideon says, "If the Lord is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers recounted to us saying, did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian." Gideon believes that their present oppression means that God is not with them but has forsaken them.

Gideon recalls the miracles God performed in Egypt. The Old Testament is replete with stories of God delivering his children from the hand of Egyptians. God reminds Israel, "I am the Lord your God who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." Recalling what God did in Egypt was used to inspire hope in what God could do in a present situation by recalling what God did in the past. Gideon seemed doubtful that the Lord was with them because when he reflects on what God did in Egypt, he wants to know "where are all his wonderful deeds" now.

The message of the exodus and Israel being delivered from Egypt is mentioned three other times in the book of Judges before Gideon mentions it in verse 13 (Jgs 2:1,12; 6:8). There are noticeable similarities between the oppression of Egypt and Midian. According to Judges 6:8-9, the prophet says to the people regarding Egypt, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the house of bondage; and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all that

oppressed you.” In Judges 6:14 God tells Gideon, “Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian.”

The experience of Israel in Egypt and Midian illuminate a similar image. In the past, Israel is in the hand of Egypt and in the present Israel is in the hand of Midian. The word hand in Hebrew is “yad.”<sup>8</sup> It is a metaphor for power. Israel in the past was in the hand of the Egyptians, and for Gideon, Israel is in the hand of the Midianites. The word oppressor in Hebrew is “*lachats*; it means to squeeze, press or oppress.”<sup>9</sup> The image is one of Israel being in the hand of the oppressor who squeeze or press her in their hand. Almost like a lemon or an orange is squeezed.

In Judges 6:9 God says, “I delivered you from the hands of the Egyptians...” The Hebrew word translated delivered is “*natsal*; it means to snatch away whether in a good or bad sense.”<sup>10</sup> According to Walter Bruggemann, “Israel is snatched out of the danger of Egyptian slavery in a forceful, physical gesture by Yahweh.”<sup>11</sup> Gideon and his generation heard the story of God delivering Israel from Egypt; however, Gideon’s reality of Israel’s present condition troubles him because they had not been delivered. Gideon’s response to the angel of the Lord calling him to deliver the children of Israel from the hand of Midian was a good excuse that should disqualify him from service. He said, “Behold my clan is the *weakest* in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family” (Jgs 6:15 RSV). The Geneva Bible 1560 and King James Bibles use the word poor instead of

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<sup>8</sup> Strong’s Concordance, H3027.

<sup>9</sup> Strong’s Concordance, H3905.

<sup>10</sup> Strong’s Concordance, H5337.

<sup>11</sup> Brueggemann, *Theology of Old Testament*, 174.

the word weakest in referring to the Gideon's family. The American Standard Version uses the word poorest.

The Hebrew word for poor is "*dal*." It comes from the root word "dalal" which is a verb that means to hang, languish, below, of distress, look weakly, brought low, dried up, not equal, empty, impoverished, and made thin.<sup>12</sup> A close examination of the meaning of "poor" or the Hebrew "dalal" makes it abundantly clear that Gideon does not see his family as strong. He sees his family as not equal, thin, and weak when compared to the Midianites. Gideon does not see leadership coming from his family to address the situation. His family is one reason that should disqualify him.

Secondly, Gideon speaks of his view of himself when he says, "I am the least in my father's house" (Jgs 6:15). The word *least* in Hebrew is "*tsa 'iy*" which is an adjective that describes what he considered of himself in his father's house or what he thought he was in his father's house. The word "*tsa 'iy*" means little, insignificant, young, mean, younger in age and youngest.<sup>13</sup> In other passages of scripture the same Hebrew word "*tsa 'iy*" is translated younger in age or youngest; for example, Genesis 19:31; 43, Genesis 48:14, and Joshua 6:26.

The rationale for Gideon's response to the angel of the Lord is expressed "The eldest son's special position was widely recognized in the ancient near east."<sup>14</sup> In Genesis 21:9-13 Ishmael is the oldest son of Abraham but because he was the first born of the slave-woman Hagar, he was not entitled to the birthright that was reserved for Isaac. Also in Genesis 48:14-20, Ephraim is said to be the younger between he and Manasseh. Joseph

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<sup>12</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, H1800.

<sup>13</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, II6810.

<sup>14</sup> Bible.org. accessed June 30, 2016, Bible.org/question/what-significant-%e2%80%9cfirstborn.

brings his two sons in before his father, Jacob or Israel, who is about to die. Jacob places his hands on both sons but he puts his right hand on the younger son Ephraim and not the oldest son Manasseh. Genesis 48:17 say, Joseph “took his father’s right hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head.” Jacob would later tell Joseph that the younger son would be greater than the older son. Joseph was well aware of the privilege position that the eldest had. The first born son would receive a double inheritance after the father’s death as well as be the head of the family Genesis 25:29-34. The problem this presents for Gideon is his father is still living and he is the least in the family or the youngest in age; therefore, there is someone before him that would fill the role of head of the family after his father dies.

Gideon must have been well aware of this tradition of entitlement for the first-born son. When he refers to himself as the “least” he seems to be saying that because of his position in the family, as the youngest in age he considers himself as little and insignificant to lead. Gideon is not the first or only person God has called to do something for him that had serious doubts and reservations about being used. As a matter of fact, God seems to pursue persons whose first response is a feeling of inadequacy or unworthiness. Hardly ever is it recorded in the scriptures that God called someone and their response was one of self-confidence and a willing spirit. It seems as though one of the signature marks of authentic calling from the Lord, is resistance because the one being called feels unworthy.

In Exodus 3:9 God said to Moses “... behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel,

out of Egypt.” It is clear that God is calling Moses to be the leader that would bring his children out of bondage. To this calling Moses gives excuses for why he is inadequate or unworthy of this huge responsibility. Exodus 3:11 Moses says to God “...Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?” Moses appears to be questioning himself as one who is qualified to lead the people of God. He is not questioning God ability but his own. Exodus 4:1, Moses says “But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you.’” Therefore, the second reason Moses gives for himself not being worthy is that the people will not listen to him. He seems to suggest that they will listen to some one but not him. Lastly, Moses says in Exodus 4:10 “I am not eloquent, I am slow of speech and tongue.” The final excuse Moses uses as a reason to disqualify him from being used by the Lord was a speech impediment. Moses was saying to God there was someone else that was better suited for the job. Within himself he did not believe he had what was needed to lead the children of Israel out of the land of their enslavement. When Moses considered himself as a leader for this assignment, he felt inadequate and unworthy.

Moses and Gideon share a lot of similarities when it comes to their response to their call to be used by the Lord. Both of them when they look at themselves did not see the qualities of leadership. In verse 16, Gideon still appears to be threatened or afraid of the Midianites. The Lord lets Gideon know that He is not afraid of the Midianites and the Lord assures Gideon of his presence when he says, “But I will be with you, and you will smite the Midianites as one man.” The promise from the Lord is that the Midianites will be defeated. The NRSV has “every one of them,” the NIV “all the Midianites together.” The TEV says, “You will crush the Midianites as easily as if they were only one man.”

Israel shall not only defeat Midian but will do so in such a convincing way as if Midian were one man and not the huge army that is compared to locusts.

According to Judges 17, what the Lord tells Gideon is still not sufficient for him. He still is not totally convinced that he is God's choice for delivering God's people from Midianite oppression. Gideon doubts regarding who he is and where he comes from continue to be his reasons for being disqualified for leadership. Therefore; Gideon wants proof or evidence that he is talking to the Lord and found favor in His sight.

The Greek word for sign is "*owth*;" it is a feminine noun, it means sign, signal, distinguishing mark, banner remembrance, miraculous sign, omen, warning, token, ensign, standard, miracle, proof."<sup>15</sup> Gideon seems to be asking the Lord for miraculous proof that he is speaking to him. One almost gets the impression that Gideon wants evidence so that he knows he is not imagining this in his own mind, but he wants to be certain that this is from the Lord.

For Gideon, the sign is to show him that he has found favor in the sight of the Lord. The Hebrew word for favor is "*chen*," it is a masculine noun; it means favor, grace, charm, elegance and acceptance. Favor is "a Hebrew idiom which means to be an object of another's favorable disposition or action or to be a recipient of another's favor or kindness."<sup>16</sup> Gideon wants to know that he is not only talking to the Lord, but that the Lord is truly with him. If this is not the Lord, Gideon is not going into battle; but if it is the Lord Gideon seems resolved in moving forward.

This story of Gideon ends with him being convinced that it is the Lord who is calling him to lead in spite of his own perceived limitations. In Judges 6:25-26, Gideon

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<sup>15</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, H226.

<sup>16</sup> Austin Precept, [Preceptaustin.org](http://Preceptaustin.org), accessed June 30, 2016, "Found favor in thy sight."



will “pull down the alter of Baal” which his fathers made and he will “cut down the Asherah that is beside it; and build and alter to the Lord.” This is a complete transformation of Gideon from his first encounter with the angel of the Lord. It is understandable why Gideon’s name would later be changed to Jerubbaal, which mean “let Baal contend.” Gideon’s fear is replaced with boldness and courage. He is no longer questioning himself and the significance of his family.

God’s patience with Gideon has helped him to overcome the negative views of himself. Because of God’s patience, Gideon is a changed man. He overcomes his view of his family as the least or weakest in Manasseh. He overcomes his ranking within the family as the least or youngest. God is not obligated to use anyone because of where they stand numerically in a family. Gideon overcomes the terror of the Mideanites. He is no longer afraid of how well equipped they were, how many there were, and how skilled they were in battle. Gideon finally accepted the fact that he was God’s choice no matter what issues he had with himself; God still chose him. Gideon is confident now and is able to move on and do what God has called him to do.

### **New Testament**

Paul’s authorship of 1 Corinthians is widely accepted. The name “Paul” is the English of the Roman name Paulus. It means small.<sup>17</sup> Saul is the English of the Hebrew name “Shaul,” it means “asked for or prayed for of God.”<sup>18</sup> Saul’s name was not changed

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<sup>17</sup> Behind the Name, “Paul,” accessed June 30, 2016, <http://www.behindthename.com/name/paul>.

<sup>18</sup> Gesenius’, Hebrew-Caldee Lexicon: Strong’s H7586.

to Paul at his conversion (Acts 9:13-15) like many people believe and it is taught.<sup>19</sup> “The name Paul is not mention in the conversion narrative but the first mention of the name Paul is not until Acts 13:1-7. Saul of Tarsus was born a Jew, ‘circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, or the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, in observance of the law a Pharisee’ (Phil 3:5). The Hebrew name given him by his parents was Saul, but, because his father was a Roman citizen (and therefore Saul inherited Roman citizenship), Saul also had the Latin name Paul (Acts 16:37, 22:25-28), the custom of dual names being common in those days. Since he grew up in a strict Pharisee environment, the name Saul was by far the more appropriate name to go by. But after his conversion Saul determined to bring the gospel to the Gentiles, so he dusted off his Roman name and became known as Paul, a name Gentiles were accustomed to.”<sup>20</sup>

Paul like many people of his time had two names. For example, John also called Mark (Acts 12:12), Joseph called Barsabbas (Acts 1:23) and Silas who is also called Silvanus (2 Cor 1:19).

The city of Corinth was close to sea and had a port. It was a “major cultural center of the Greco-Roman world because it hosted the bi-annual Isthmian Games which began in 581 B.C.”<sup>21</sup> Corinth would later revolt against Rome and would lose that battle and become a colony of the Roman Empire. Corinth “was the sight of the temple to Aphrodite. To this temple were attached 1,000 temple prostitutes (Strabo, Geography

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<sup>19</sup> Catholic Answers, “When Did God Change Saul’s Name to Paul,” accessed June 30, 2016, <http://www.catholic.com/quickquestions/why-did-god-change-sauls-name-to-paul>.

<sup>20</sup> Catholic Answers, “When Did God Change Saul’s Name to Paul.”

<sup>21</sup> Bob Utley, “Paul’s Letter to a Troubled Church: 1&2 Corinthians,” *Free Bible Commentary*, accessed June 30, 2016, [http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/new\\_testament\\_studies/VOL06/VOL06.html](http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/new_testament_studies/VOL06/VOL06.html).

8.6.20-22). To be called a ‘Corinthian’ (i.e., Korinthiazesthai, coined by Aristophanes [450-385 B.C.] was synonymous to loose, riotous living.”<sup>22</sup>

In the book, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Paul receives information from Chole of internal conflicts going on within the congregation. Paul says, “For it has been reported to me by Chole’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren” (1:11). Within the Corinthian Church, there is “the party spirit by which various sectors of the church identified themselves with particular leaders, apparently boasting of the superior wisdom of their self-identification in each case (1:10-17).”<sup>23</sup> Some additional issues facing the church were the issue of incest (5:1-13), believers taking one another to secular court to resolve problems (6:1-11), and denial of the resurrection (15:7-34). Paul also addressed issues regarding public meetings. He deals with the “the relationship between men and women (1 Cor 11:12-16), addresses abuses at the Lord’s Supper (11:17-34), and the distribution and exercising of the Spirit’s gifts (12:1-14:40).”<sup>24</sup>

Paul, like Gideon, had an extraordinary experience that caused his life to change in a tremendous way. Prior to the changing of his name from Saul, Paul was on his way to Damascus to obtain letters from the high priest, Ciaphas, that gave him permission to bring anyone in “The Way,” or expressing faith in Jesus Christ, that was in the synagogues whether man or woman to be bound and brought to Jerusalem (Acts 9:1-2). When known by the name Saul, Paul was not on the side of Christ but was a known persecutor of the early church. When Stephen was dragged out of the city and was about

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<sup>22</sup> Utley, “Paul’s Letter to a Troubled Church.”

<sup>23</sup> D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction To the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House), 262.

<sup>24</sup> Carson, Moo, and Morris, *An Introduction To the New Testament*, 264.

to be stoned to death in Acts 7:58, “the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.” The NIV and NRSV refer to him as “young man” which, according to Elliot’s Commentary for English Readers, is from age twenty one to twenty eight years.”<sup>25</sup>

Acts 8:3 say of Saul and his persecution, “he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. That word havoc means to destroy, devastate, ravage, signifies the act of ferocious animals, such as bears, wolves and the like, in seeking and devouring their prey.”<sup>26</sup> This is the kind of zeal with which Saul went after followers of Christ. However, it was while Saul was on his way to Damascus, with the synagogue letters giving him the authority to arrest any man or woman promoting Jesus, that he had his own conversion experience with the Lord.

In 1 Corinthians 15:8, Paul says, “Last of all, as to one untimely born he appeared to me.” There is great debate over the meaning of the word “last” in this verse. Some have argued that the Greek word for last “eschatos means last in time or place.”<sup>27</sup> The position taken from this understanding is that Paul meant that he was the last apostle and after him there would be no more. This is where some schools of thought take the position that Paul is last apostle and there are no more apostles after him. Some hold to the doctrine that the apostolic office is no longer functional because Paul was the last. However, if we take this position for this particular text, then Paul would come across as arrogant and puffed up.

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<sup>25</sup> Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, Acts 7:58.

<sup>26</sup> Clarks Commentary on Acts 8:3.

<sup>27</sup> *Strong’s Concordance*, G2078.

In this particular verse, others have taken *last* or “eschatos to mean of rank, grade of worth, last i.e. lowest.”<sup>28</sup> This position seems to be in line with the context. In verse 5, Paul gives a chronological time frame of all those who the resurrected Christ appeared to. “He appeared to Cephas, and to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time... Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all ... he appeared to me.” Paul seems to be addressing the order in which the resurrected Christ revealed himself. Paul was not the first to witness Christ’s resurrection but he did witness him even though he was last compared to the others.

Paul uses another self-description besides “last” to reflect what he thought of himself in light of the other apostles. In verse 8, Paul refers to himself as “one untimely born.” The NRSV uses “untimely born,” the RSV also uses “untimely born” and NAS uses “untimely born. However, the Geneva Bible 1560 uses “borne out of due time.” The Greek word “*ektroma*” is a natural noun that means begetting, bear (of begetting), born: denotes an abortion, and untimely birth, from *ektitrosko*, to miscarry. In 1 Corinthians 15:8, the apostle likens himself to “one born out of due time;” i.e., in point of time inferior to the rest of the apostles, as a premature birth come short of a mature one.”<sup>29</sup> By this definition it seems Paul is trying to give us the imagery of him not being a part of those who walked with Christ or being taught by Christ. If miscarriage is to be correct, perhaps Paul is comparing a miscarriage, which is an event that happens unexpectedly or all of a sudden, with his encounter with the risen Christ, which occurred also unexpectedly. In like manner Paul was not expecting to meet Christ when he was on his

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<sup>28</sup> *Strong's Concordance*, G2078.

<sup>29</sup> *Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, G1626.

way to Damascus to persecute believers. This meeting was not planned. According to Paul, “Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecute thou me?’” (Acts 9:4). The old Saul who was on a mission of destroying the church died that day and the new Saul, was birthed. This experience with Jesus Christ was not planned but unexpected. Perhaps this is the vain in which Paul sees himself as being a miscarriage or born out of due time.

In 1 Corinthians 15:9, Paul says, “For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church.” The word “least” in Greek is “*elachistos*, it is an adjective, and it means smallest in size, in amount: of management of affair, in importance: what is the least amount, in authority: of commandments: in the estimation of men: of persons: in rank and excellence: of persons.”<sup>30</sup> Several commentaries agree that least is not in reference to smallest in size. Even though Paul’s name “Paulus” means small or little.

The same word that Paul uses for least, “*elachistos*” is used in other passages of scripture and the meaning is in reference to “importance, authority of commandments, and rank and excellence of persons.” Matthew 5:19 say, “Anyone who breaks one of the *least* of these commandments and teaches others to do the same shall be called the *least* in the kingdom of God.” Matthew 25:40 say, “The king will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the *least* of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” These scriptures use the same Greek word *elachistos* and in each instance, the meaning is in reflection to importance, authority, rank, and excellence:

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<sup>30</sup> Strong’s Concordance, G1646.

When Paul calls himself “the least of the apostles,” it should not be viewed as Gideon who referred to himself as least because of his age and family lineage. Paul’s understanding of least is not to be confused with his family connection. According to Paul, his family origin and societal status would not support him being the least in this definition. Paul says in Acts 21:39, “I am a Jew from Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city...”

Tarsus was a Roman province of Cilicia. The Roman general Pompey subjected Tarsus to Rome, where it became the capital of the Roman province of Cilicia, where the governor resided in Asia Minor. It was made a free state by Emperor Augustus Caesar.<sup>31</sup>

Roman citizenship was granted to those born in a free state or “those adopted into one of the original tribes of Rome... this meant all males above fifteen years of age who were neither slaves nor aliens, and all aliens who had received a grant of Roman citizenship.”<sup>32</sup> According to the accounts in Acts, Paul intentionally raises the issue of his Roman citizenship just before a Roman centurion takes him to be beaten. In Acts 22:25, Paul says, “As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, ‘is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn’t been found guilty.’” Paul knew that being a Roman citizen came with certain privileges. “The most precious privilege of a Roman citizen was the safeguarding of his person, property, and rights by the law, and his immunity from torture or violence before the trying of his case.”<sup>33</sup> Paul had not been found guilty in Acts 22:25 and he raise a point of legality. The result of Acts 22:25 ended with the centurion not flogging him without finding him guilty but Paul tells

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<sup>31</sup> Biblestudy.org “Tarsus,” accessed June 30, 2016, <http://www.biblestudy.org>.

<sup>32</sup> Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, 25.

<sup>33</sup> Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, 395.

the centurion's commander that he was born a Roman citizen. Paul was not flogged because he was a Roman citizen. The point being made is that because Paul was a Roman citizen, he would not be consider the least but was afforded certain privileges or rights because of association to Rome.

Paul was not only a Roman citizen but he came from a pedigree of distinction. Paul was a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin according to Philippians 3:5, and he was as a Pharisee. "At the beginning of the exile, spiritual development was in the hands of the priest and the scribes. During the Maccabean revolt their ways parted. After the Maccabean victory they emerged as two conflicting sect. From the priestly circle came the Sadducees. From the scribes the Pharisees emerged."<sup>34</sup> The Pharisees were strict when it came to the law. They are credited for adding to the commandments in the Mosaic Law for the expressed purposes of helping the people. However, the Pharisees created many more commandments that were too stringent for the people to follow.<sup>35</sup> The Pharisees were one of the most respected religions and political groups. Again, Paul was a member of this elite group and was well respected. One would not be consider the least who was associated with this religious circle.

Paul was a Pharisee hut he studied under Gamaiel, he says this in Acts 22:3. Gamaiel is the grandson of Hillel, "who was one of the most influential teachers of antiquity ...he is a generation before Jesus Christ."<sup>36</sup> Therefore, least is not in reference

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<sup>34</sup> Abba, *My People the Story of the Jews*, 79-80.

<sup>35</sup> "The Rules of the Pharisees," accessed June 30, 2016, [PurseGod.org](http://PurseGod.org).

<sup>36</sup> Abram Leon Sachar, *A History of the Jews* (Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill), 136, 144.



to status, but as it relates to Paul, it is his comparison to the other apostles who came before him.

What is most revealing about Paul's humble view of himself is in large part because of what he admits he did to the church in his former life before meeting Jesus Christ. Paul says "he is unfit to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God" (1 Cor 15:9). Throughout his missionary ministry, Paul repeatedly brings up his past and how he persecuted the church of Jesus Christ. In Acts 26:10-11, he says "I locked up many of the saints in prison, ... when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them." In Galatians 1:13, Paul says to the church "For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it."<sup>37</sup> In First Timothy 1:13, Paul says "... I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor..." In 1 Timothy 1: 15, Paul says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Paul does not try to hide his past and the role he played in trying to destroy the church of Jesus Christ. He was always lifting up this negative part of his life as a testimony of his transformation. Paul like Gideon has been transformed from what he saw in himself from last, least, and untimely born, to an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the very beginning of 1 Corinthians 15, Paul reminds the Corinthian church of the most important thing he has provided for them; "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures." For Paul, the only reason he is an apostle is because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>37</sup> Sachar, *A History of the Jews*, 136, 144.

From a purely human point of view, the Corinthian church appeared to be bad off. Based on the challenges of the church, one would think that the situation was hopeless.<sup>38</sup> There was a Greek Proverb about the city, which speaks a great deal about the moral decay of Corinth, “It is not every man who can afford a journey to Corinth.” According to Paul, if the Lord Jesus Christ could change him then the Lord could change and transform the church that was having serious problems of immorality.

If Paul could vote, he would still be persecuting the church. However, because the decision was the Lord’s Paul like Gideon was chosen to the work in spite of his past.

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<sup>38</sup> The Lavista Church of Christ, “Corinthians,” accessed June 30, 2016, <http://LVstudies/corinthians>.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

“I really believe he [Harry Hoosier] is one of the best preachers in the world,” was the opinion of Thomas Coke, who, along with Francis Asbury, was one of American Methodism’s first two bishops. “There is such an amazing power attends his preaching, though he cannot read; and he is one of the humblest creatures I ever saw.”<sup>1</sup> “In spite of such accolades, even the bare facts of Hosier’s life elude historians, who must therefore sprinkle probabilities throughout their narratives. Born about 1750, perhaps as a plantation slave, maybe in North Carolina, he experienced Christian conversion at some point and became Asbury’s traveling companion. Soon he began to exhort after the sermon, urging the listeners to apply the preacher’s words to their lives. Later, he was the principal speaker at services.”<sup>2</sup>

The historical foundations will largely focus on Harry Hoosier and his role in the Methodist Church. It will demonstrate how the quest for freedom and liberation during times of slavery can be replicated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by providing a methodology for overcoming oppression today. Due to his race and slave status, Hoosier became an example of how his giftedness for ministry compelled him to historic acclaim as a Methodist preacher. Born during the time of slavery, Hoosier’s voice was limited

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<sup>1</sup> John G. McEllhenney, “HARRY HOSIER: An African American Who Gave A Beat To Methodist Preaching c.1750-c.1806,” *North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church*, accessed May 18, 2016, <https://nccumc.org/history/mentionable-methodists/harry-hosier/>.

<sup>2</sup> McEllhenney, “HARRY HOSIER: An African American.”

regarding his treatment as a human being. Like most slaves during his time, he faced unfair treatment, discrimination, and a reduction of basic human rights, however, Hoosier emerged as an overcomer to be a leader within the Methodist Church.

“Beyond question, slavery is one of the greatest atrocities of civilization. Perhaps it holds reign as the single greatest social injustice to all of human history. When we think of human atrocities, our minds go to the Holocaust with its six to seven million Jewish victims”<sup>3</sup> in addition to the enslavement of countless African during the time of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.<sup>4</sup>

When researching the history of the enslavement of people from Africa, we find, “West Africans, from central and western parts of the continent were sold by West Africans to Western European slave traders, or by direct European capture to the Americas.” They were transported across the Atlantic Ocean to countries such as those found in the Portuguese, British, Spanish, Dutch Empire, and the thirteen American colonies.<sup>5</sup>

The transportation of Africans was inhumane. According to an article published by the University of Michigan Education Department, we are given a vivid depiction of the conditions of African slaves during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The article says,

In order to understand the atrocities of the Middle Passage, you have to create a vivid picture in your mind. For the next few minutes I want you to imagine one of the most painful migrations in the history of mankind. You are an African who has just been captured by a group of men you have never seen before. You are

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<sup>3</sup> Irv Brendlinger, *John Wesley and Slavery: Myth and Reality*, accessed May 18, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1116&context=ccs>, 223.

<sup>4</sup> David Eltis Behrendy, Richardson David Stephen, Herbert S. Klein, “Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD –Rom,” accessed May 18, 2016, [http://eh.net/book\\_reviews/the-trans-atlantic-slave-trade-a-database-on-cd-rom/](http://eh.net/book_reviews/the-trans-atlantic-slave-trade-a-database-on-cd-rom/).

<sup>5</sup> Behrendy, Stephen, Klein, “Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.”

snatched away from your native land and loved ones, and you have no idea of where you are going, or if you will ever return. You, along with hundreds of your fellow countrymen are hound together by chains, unable to scream because no one is listening to your cries. You are being forced to leave with people of white skin that you have never seen before. Once you are on this ship that is supposed to take you to your fate, you are being yelled at and beaten. You can't even yell back, because you don't speak the language; and you have no idea what these strange men are capable of doing to you. As you look around, you see men, women, and children scared, alienated, and sleeping on top of each other. You close your eyes to block out the pain, but you can't escape from the chilling sounds of crying and despair. When you open your eyes, you see people starving and dying. You hear women being raped and beaten; and babies being murdered. Months have gone by, and while you see your fellow brothers and sisters die, you are still there. One day you wake up and begin to cry. You cry so hard to the point that you are gasping for air. The stench on this ship is almost unbearable but you struggle to take each breath. You begin to pray. When you pray, you pray to die. Right now even death could be no worse than this hell on earth. As each day goes by, you want desperately to die. You even begin to starve yourself but that doesn't work. You do everything possible to die, until one day the ship voyage comes to an end. You think it is finally over, but you have no idea what kind of life is ahead for you. You have survived the passage, but your soul and spirit has been taken away from you. Still you pray.<sup>6</sup>

The inhuman treatment in transportation can further be witnessed in the statement they were “herded together on deck, they were immediately handcuffed to one another and chains were riveted to their legs. Between desks, in the space, which they were to occupy for the next two months, they were pack spoon fashion. There was no room to stand, often not enough to sit. And these dark and filthy holds, lying week after week in the same positions, without sunlight or sanitation, with no decent food and not enough water, with little to no exercise their bodies developed painful sores. Kicked when they whimpered, flogged when they fainted or complained, the dazed and

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<sup>6</sup> “The Middle Passage,” accessed May 18, 2016, [http://umich.edu/~ece/student\\_projects/slavery/middlepassage.html](http://umich.edu/~ece/student_projects/slavery/middlepassage.html).

bewildered Africans naturally became the victims of diseases which thrive under these conditions.”<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, it was the belief of the slave traders that diseased and sick slaves would not yield a profitable return. Therefore, slaves were thrown overboard to their death. It has been recorded that the waters of the Middle Passage became heavily shark infested. Sharks are said to have followed the boats to eat the slaves that were thrown overboard. However, slave traders profited either way because most of them had taken out insurance on slaves and reported these losses to their insurance company. Therefore, of the above mentioned 12.6 million Africans that made it to the New World, it does not take into account the Africans who never made it to their destination. They were either thrown overboard because they were diseased, ill or they were murdered; to endure slavery was no guarantee. Many did not make it, but those who did overcame tremendous adversity. To survive the horror experienced in the process of transportation was a sign of unusual strength.

Slavery on “American soil would not prove to be much better than what Africans had to endure in the process of transportation. Slaves were placed on auction blocks and sold like you sell cotton, sugar, tobacco, and cattle. This method was not only dehumanizing but also immoral.”<sup>8</sup>

Adam Smith talks about the animalization of a people, he says that slaves were sometimes kept in harns with other animals. They were also branded like cattle. The

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<sup>7</sup> Arna, Bontemps, *The Story of the Negro* (New York, NY: Random House Publishing, 1963), 57-58.

<sup>8</sup> “Black Peoples of America: The Slave Auction,” accessed May 18, 2016, [http://www.historyonthenet.com/slave\\_trade/slave\\_auction.htm](http://www.historyonthenet.com/slave_trade/slave_auction.htm).

symbol used was what identified the owner. Solomon Northup, a slave, said, “We were each provided with blankets, such as are used upon horses—the only bedding I was allowed ...”<sup>9</sup>

Many times when slaves were sold, families were separated. Mothers were taken from their children and vice versa. Husbands were taken from their wives as well as their children. In many instances they would never see members of their family again. There is an incident recorded by Elizabeth Keckley, a seamstress for Mary Todd Lincoln, “when I was about seven years old, I witnessed for the first time the sale of a human being. Master had purchased his hogs for the winter, for which he was unable to pay in full. To escape from his embarrassment, it was necessary to sell one of the slaves. Little Joe, the son of the cook, was selected the victim. His mother was ordered to dress him up in his Sunday clothes, and send him to the house. He came in with a bright face, was placed in the scales, and was sold, like the hogs at so much per pound. His mother was kept in ignorance of the transaction but her suspicions were aroused...and the mother went down to the grave without ever seeing her child again...”<sup>10</sup>

Slaves were also denied the privilege of learning to read. “For the slaves literacy was not just an individual skill; it had a communal aspect, greatly enhancing the group’s ability to resist and escape. Literate slaves could read abolitionist literature, write their own passes to freedom, and publicize the horrors of slavery.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Gilbert Osofsky, *Putting On Old Massa: The Slave Narratives of Henry Bibb, William Wells Brown, and Solomon Northup* (New York, NY: Joanna Cotler Books, 1970), 245.

<sup>10</sup> “A Slave Life,” accessed May 18, 2016, [Eyewitnesstohistory.com/slavelife.htm](http://Eyewitnesstohistory.com/slavelife.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Janet Duitsman, *When I Can Read My Title Clear: Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1992).

The fear of many slave owners was that "... literacy would bring slaves new ideas and a sense of their own power ..."<sup>12</sup> Insurrections and revolts were one of the fears of slave owners. Therefore, many plantation owners were in favor of criminal penalties for teaching slaves or even free Blacks to read or write.<sup>13</sup> "In Louisiana the penalty for teaching slaves to read or write is one year imprisonment."<sup>14</sup> "In Georgia, if a white teach a free Negro or slave to read or write, he is fined 500 and imprisoned at the discretion of the court; if the offender be a colored man, bond or free, he is to be fined or whipped at the discretion of the court."<sup>15</sup> "In North Carolina to teach a slave to read or write or to sell or give him any book (Bible not excepted) or pamphlet is punished with thirty nine lashes or imprisonment if the offender be a free Negro but if white with a fine of two hundred dollars."<sup>16</sup> What is clear is the penalty for whites was more often a fine to be paid; however, the slave was beaten with many lashes and sometimes imprisoned.

With slavery at its peak, Harry Hoosier was born into to a cultural climate whereby the system of slavery made Negroes feel inferior and insignificant to whites. There is not a lot of information known about Harry Hoosier. There is no information about his parents. There are conflicting dates of Harry's time and place of birth. Some have said he was born in 1750 in what is now known as Fayetteville North Carolina. Harry was like so many other slaves who did not know the exact date and place of his

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<sup>12</sup> Duitsman, *When I Can Read My Title Clear*.

<sup>13</sup> Duitsman, *When I Can Read My Title Clear*.

<sup>14</sup> "Slavery and the International Slave Trade in The United States of America," accessed May 18, 2016, [Yale.edu/glc/archive/927.htm](http://Yale.edu/glc/archive/927.htm).

<sup>15</sup> "Slavery and the International Slave."

<sup>16</sup> "Slavery and the International Slave."



birth. What is known is that Harry Hoosier was a slave born in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Again, there is not a tremendous amount of information on Harry Hoosier but what is known about him speaks volumes to how insignificant he may have been viewed by the society of his time, but God would raise him up to do great things for the kingdom.

“Harry was small in stature, he was coal black, with eyes of remarkable brilliance, and intelligence...”<sup>17</sup> Perhaps the fact that he was “coal black” is the reason he was also called “Black Harry.” This man would become one of the greatest preachers this world has ever known. He would do a great deal of preaching within the Methodist Episcopal Church. What is interesting is why Harry Hoosier associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church. There were members of this denomination that participated in slavery like many whites in other denominations. One can only speculate as to why Harry was connected to Methodism.

Booker T. Washington, in 1909, made sweeping claims for Methodism. The Negro, he said, “seems from the beginning to have been closely associated with the Methodist Church in the United States.”<sup>18</sup> He continued, “Methodism had started in England among the poor and outcast it was natural, therefore, that when its missionaries came to America they should seek to bring into the church the outcast and neglected people, especially slaves.”<sup>19</sup> Washington would go on to say, “In so many parts of the south the Methodist meetinghouses were referred to by the more aristocratic

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<sup>17</sup> W. P. Harrison, *The Gospel Among the Slaves* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of M. E. Church, South, 1893), 127.

<sup>18</sup> Harrison, *The Gospel Among the Slaves*, 127.

<sup>19</sup> Harrison, *The Gospel Among the Slaves*, 127.

denominations as “Negro Churches.” This was due to the fact that the Methodist often began their work in the community with an appeal to the slaves.”<sup>20</sup>

The founder of Methodism, John Wesley was very aware of slavery. He spent almost two years in America on the Savannah Georgia colony. Wesley was then in his thirties, when a ship called the Zong experienced trouble on the sea in 1781. The captain of the ship decided to throw 132 slaves overboard and recover the losses through the insurance company. One of the slaves managed to get back on board and hide. This slave would tell the true story of what happened and the insurance company refused to cover the losses. It was not until Wesley was sixty-nine that he publically spoke against slavery. It is not certain why he waited so late in his ministry to speak and write against it, but what is certain is when Wesley did speak against slavery, he never wavered. Maybe this is one of the reasons why Harry connected to the Methodist Church. For a white man to speak and write against slavery, during the peak of slavery, was perhaps appealing to Harry Hoosier, a Black slave.

Wesley said of slavery “that we may never more steal and sell our brethren like beasts: never murder them by thousands and tens of thousands.”<sup>21</sup> This statement gives the impression that Wesley was tired of slavery and the damage it had done. He also said,

O, whatever, it cost put a stop to its [slavery’s] cry before it is too late: Instantly, at any price were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands are at present stained with blood. Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt; spill no more blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood; do not pay him for doing it! Whether you are a Christian or no, show yourself a man! Be not more savage than a lion or

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<sup>20</sup> Harrison, *The Gospel Among the Slaves*, 127.

<sup>21</sup> *Wesley Works*, vol. XI, 145, “A Serious Address to the People of England with Regard to the State of the Nation 1788” (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker House Books, 1978).

bear! Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature.<sup>22</sup>

To read these words or to hear them read by someone is breathe taking. For a slave to hear that he is considered a brother, not a beast or property, to hear a call for ending the shedding of innocent blood would cause a slave to be overjoyed and ready to enlist in such a place. Perhaps this is one of the reasons Harry Hoosier became a part of the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Episcopal Church would become the vehicle that God would use for Harry Hoosier to preach to hundreds and thousands of people. What is amazing about this kind of achievement is that Harry was illiterate. He could not read or write like so many slaves during this era. It was against the law as previously stated. “Black Harry had never gone to grade school; he had never been to Oxford, or any institution of higher learning. However, individuals who have gone to some of the most prestigious schools in the world, as well as some of the most influential people of this time have stated that Harry Hoosier was the greatest preacher they had ever heard.

Francis Asbury, not only allowed Harry to travel with him but it has been suggested that during these long horseback rides, Harry and Asbury would talk about a number of things including theology, the Bible, and faith. Asbury would allow Harry to preach to slaves at first but whites stay and listen out of curiosity. Harry’s power and giftedness as a preacher seemed to win whites over. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a member of the Continental Congress, personal friend of Benjamin Franklin, as well as a signer of The Declaration of Independence, said of Harry Hoosier, “Making allowances for his

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<sup>22</sup> John Wesley, 1703-1791, *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999), 72.

illiteracy he was the greatest orator in America.”<sup>23</sup> Henry Boehm says of Harry’s preaching ability, “his voice was musical and his tongue as the pen of a ready writer. He was unboundedly popular and many would rather hear him than the bishops.”<sup>24</sup>

A similar acknowledgement of Harry Hosier’s preaching ability comes from a preaching engagement in Wilmington Delaware. A crowd of whites gathered in the Old Asbury Chapel to hear Bishop Francis Asbury. Because the crowd was so large, many whites stood outside to listen. One person said, “If all Methodist preachers could preach like the bishop we should like to be consistent hearers.” Another replied, “That is not the Bishop but the Bishop’s servant you heard.” The answer, “If such be the servant what the master be?”<sup>25</sup>

Asbury would write in his journal in October 27, 1781 when he was planning a return trip to Virginia, “Harry seems to be unwilling to go with me: I fear his speaking so much to white people in the city has been, or will be, injurious; he has been flattered and may be ruined.”<sup>26</sup> What is not certain is whether Harry preaching ability is the cause of him becoming conceded with the adulation from whites or if Asbury became jealous of Harry’s preaching popularity. Harry’s gift of preaching became well known. His “sermons were appreciated by audiences without distinction of color.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Proceedings, IX: 16, also Stevens, II: 1744.

<sup>24</sup> John McEllhenny, 1750-1806, “An African American That Who Gave a Beat To Methodist Preaching,” Archives and History, General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, accessed May 18, 2016, <http://www.gcuh.org/history/biographies/harry-hosier>.

<sup>25</sup> Stevens, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church II, 175.

<sup>26</sup> Asbury, “Journals and Letter”, I, 413, (October 27, 1781).

<sup>27</sup> John Fletcher Hurst, *The History of Methodism* (New York, NY: Eaton & Mains, 1902), IV, 291.

John Wesley would send Thomas Coke to America in 1784. Asbury would meet with Coke in Delaware. Harry Hoosier was there among other preachers. Asbury is said to have planned a trip of frontier preaching for Coke. It consisted of one thousand miles, from Delaware to Maryland. Coke's helper for this trip would be Harry Hoosier. Coke says of Asbury and this trip, "He has given me his black (Harry by name) and borrowed an excellent horse for me." It is not certain if Asbury gave Harry to help Coke or if it was to separate from Harry from his preaching fame. This statement by Coke also suggests more of a servant relationship between Asbury and Harry more than an amicable one. After Coke traveled briefly with Harry and had an opportunity to hear him he makes this statement of Harry's preaching and him as a person:

I have now had the pleasure of hearing Harry preach several times. I sometimes give notice immediately after preaching, that in a little time Harry will preach to the Blacks; but the whites always stay to hear him. Sometimes I publish to preach at candlelight, as the Negroes can better attend at that time. I really believe he is one of the best Preachers in the world, there is such an amazing power attending his preaching, though he cannot read; and he is one of the most humblest creatures I ever saw.<sup>28</sup>

Coke seems to be mesmerized by the preaching capacity of an illiterate servant. Coke says that Harry is such a powerful preacher that he announces or gives notice in advance so that others can come to hear him. Coke also says that Harry is "the most humblest creature I ever saw." This view of Harry seems to run counter to what Asbury said about Harry being injured by flattery he has received from preaching to whites. Coke's description of Harry is that he is a humble man. This is not the assessment of a fellow slave or servant this is the observation of Thomas Coke a leader in the Methodist Church and one who is Oxford educated.

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<sup>28</sup> Extracts of the Journal of Rev. Dr Coke's Five Visits to America (London, UK: G. Paramour 1793), 16.

Harry would travel with Richard Whatcoat from 1786-1788 while he was the Presiding Elder of Delaware, Eastern Maryland, and Eastern Pennsylvania. "Whatcoat reported an increase of 847 negro members from the three charges under his supervision for the year of 1787."<sup>29</sup> It is strongly believe that Harry Hoosier had a lot to do with this kind of growth.

Richard Whatcoat would later become the third Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Asbury was the first and after him was Thomas Coke. Therefore, is must be stated that Harry Hoosier, traveled and preached along side of the first three bishops of the Methodist Church. It also speaks volumes for those in leadership who would grant him this privilege. It also says even more about Harry Hoosier, "Black Harry" who was unable to read or write, but this did not hinder him.

Harry never looked at not being able to read or write as an excuse for him not being able to preach. Harry seemed to believe that not being unable to read and write was a gift from God. Richard Allen, who was connected with the Methodist Church but would later establish the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), attempted to teach Harry to read but Harry said, "When he tried to read, he lost his gift of preaching, and gave it up entirely."<sup>30</sup> Harry would say, "I sing by faith, pray by faith, preach by faith, and do everything by faith, without faith in the Lord Jesus I can do nothing."<sup>31</sup> Harry takes no credit for his preaching gift but gives total praise to the Lord Jesus Christ. This does not sound like arrogance but humility. The Methodist Church experienced significant growth

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<sup>29</sup> Minutes Taken at The Several Annual Conferences of The Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1788 found in The Minutes of The Methodist Conference Annually Held In America; from 1773-1813 (New York, NY: Daniel Hill and Thomas Ward, 1819), 59-67.

<sup>30</sup> Minutes Taken at The Several Annual Conferences.

<sup>31</sup> G. A. Raybold, *Reminiscences Of Methodism in West Jersey* (New York, NY: Lane & Scott, 1849), 166-167.

through his participation as a preacher. However, Harry still experienced tremendous discrimination because of who he was, a Negro.

“One example of discrimination that Harry experienced was when he was traveling and needed lodging. The house he lodged in belonged to a lady. Harry overheard her saying, “She would not hear the Black.” Harry heard the remarks and went to pray. At service later on that day, he spoke “in the most humble manner” of how all people suffer from sin like a disease and how God has sent a physician to heal sinners. He then lamented the possibility that some might reject the physician God had sent to them that day because his hands were black. The prayer at the end of his sermon was described as awfully powerful and overwhelming.” The woman was made aware of her prejudices as were many others gathered that day.<sup>32</sup> Harry though discriminated against would use the preaching moment and the word of the Lord to convict and change a person’s heart.

With all of his work and travel, Harry was able to attend the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, Maryland 1784. This was the conference where the Methodist Church officially separated from the Episcopal Church. Because of Harry’s color he was not given a visible role in the meeting. Another example of discrimination was evidenced when Harry would preach. William Pierson of Fisk University said, “Elitist began to refer to converts of the uneducated Black preacher as Hoosiers.”<sup>33</sup> This undoubtedly was a term of disrespect for anyone influenced under Harry’s leadership. There is nothing positive about being called a Hoosier.

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<sup>32</sup> Raybold Reminiscences, “Web Stephen Introducing Black Harry Housier: The History Behind Indiana’s Namesake,” *Indiana Magazine of History* vol. 98, no.1: 30-41.

<sup>33</sup> *Christian Century*, May 8, 1996.

Perhaps the greatest issue of discrimination that Harry experienced after all he did for the Methodist Episcopal Church was being denied ordination like his white contemporaries. A petition to ordain Harry was made by nineteen pastors of the Philadelphia Conference prior to a slated meeting in Chestertown Maryland on May 1, 1805; the term ordain was never mentioned.<sup>34</sup> The formal request reads as follows:

The Preachers Recommendations  
Henry Hoosier African

May 1, 1805

To the bishops and conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to assemble in Chestertown the 1st May 1805.

Dear Bretheren,

We your brethren, the official members of the Methodist Church in St. George in Philadelphia Believe Henry Hoosier an African, a man that would be very useful if the Bishops and Conference in their wisdom could without establishing a bad precedent direct him.

William Colbert, W. Bishop, John Davis, William Fox, Hugh Macurdy, A. K. M'Caskey, Thos. Branagan, John Woolson, Hugh Smith, Daniel McCurdy, John Jones, Jacob, John Andrew, David Abbott.<sup>35</sup>

The greatest discrimination of them all was by those in the church who would ultimately make the decision not to grant him ordination. The assumption would be that those that held the power in this decision undoubtedly had witnessed Harry's preaching and knew how gifted and committed he was; yet none of that mattered. "Blacks were given recognition as local preachers hut they were not eligible to be ordained as deacon until after 1800."<sup>36</sup> Richard Allen would be ordained a deacon in 1799. He would be the

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<sup>34</sup> Warren Thomas Smith, "Harry Hoosier: Black Preacher Extraordinary," *The Interdenominational Theological Center*, vol. 7, Spg. 80: 125.

<sup>35</sup> Original in the Archives of St. George's United Methodist Church, Philadelphia, courtesy of Robert L. Curry, Pastor and Joshua E. Licorish, Pastor of Zoar United Methodist Church.

<sup>36</sup> Dee E. Andrews, *The Methodist in Revolutionary America, 1760-1800: The Shaping of An Evangelical Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).



first Black to Harry would witness the ordination of his white contemporaries while he himself would never know that joy. Surely this must have affected Harry in some way. Not being ordained or refusal of ordination says a lot about the times, the people, and what was really thought of him as a person.

Most of the biographical literature on Harry Hoosier document that he had “fallen from Grace” and became an alcoholic. Henry Boehm would give the following reasoning as to why Harry turned to drinking, “Poor Harry was so petted and made so much of that he became lifted up. Falling under the influence of strong drink, he made shipwreck of the faith, for years he remained in that condition.”<sup>37</sup> Apparently, Boehm believes the attention given Harry for his giftedness, as a preacher was the cause for him turning to drinking. Boehm also seems to suggest that Harry had been an alcoholic for some time when he says, “for years he remained in that condition.”<sup>38</sup> Warren Thomas Smith says “Boehm’s reference “for years” must be examined. As late as 1805 Harry thrilled congregations with his preaching.”<sup>39</sup>

For Smith, Harry’s drinking problem was not “for years” but for a matter of months. However, most sources seem to agree that Harry had a drinking problem. The bigger issue that is not known is what pushed Harry to become an alcoholic. People who drink excessively do not do so because they are elated with the way their life is unfolding. Most seem to be pushed to drink because of some pain or some hurt in their life. Excessive drinking is a way to cope with pain. If this is true, Harry Hoosier, “Black

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<sup>37</sup> Henry Boehm, *Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical, of Sixty-four Years in the Ministry* (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2014), 92.

<sup>38</sup> Boehm, *Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical*, 92.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas, *Harry Hoosier: Black Preacher Extraordinary*, 126.

Harry” was pushed to drink to try to hide from his hurt and his pain. Did he drinking because he was gifted to preach to large crowds? Blacks and whites praised him for how good he was.

Was it because he had become too “lifted up” or conceded that he fell? He would never be lifted but so far because of whom he was, a Negro. He was allowed to preach but ordination was kept from him, therefore, he would never be allowed to lead to his fullest capacity. He would never be allowed serve the elements for communion. He would never be allowed to officiate a wedding. He would never be allowed to pastor a congregation. Just preaching without ordination was a way of keeping Harry in his place.

The good news of Harry’s story is that he would not stay entangled in the snare of alcohol. Harry would overcome this obstacle with the help of the Lord. Whatever the cause of his decline, Hoosier had the strength of character to break this habit. He soon resumed preaching in Philadelphia, where he was always in high demand. The African Wonder, as he was sometimes called, died in 1806 and “was borne to the grave by a great procession of both white and Black admirers, who buried him as a hero, once overcome, but finally victorious.”<sup>40</sup>

Harry is great example of not letting the challenges of life confine a person’s ability. Harry may have been considered as least likely to be used by God but he would become a great demonstration of what God can do with the least and insignificant.

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<sup>40</sup> Stephen H. Webb, “Introducing Black Harry Hoosier: The History Behind Indiana’s Namesake,” accessed May 18, 2016, <http://www.miniearforcongress.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Harry-Hoosier-by-Stephen-Webb.pdf>.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Leadership is important in every facet of life. In the church today no issue is more critical than leadership. With the revolving door of a great worldwide harvest with thousands upon thousands coming to Christ each day, unfortunately many who come to Christ end up falling right back into the world once more because they never became a follower of Christ; the reason being the lack of leadership. According to John Maxwell, the guru of leadership says, “everything rises and falls on leadership.” This paper will address general leadership and the views connected to it and the contrast of leadership theology. It is our hope by addressing these two areas one will walk away with a better understanding of why theological leadership is so important in the church of Jesus Christ. Lastly we will look at what it means to be a disciple of Christ and how we must look to him as our model of leadership.

#### **Leadership Theory**

The idea of leadership in secular society or general leadership theory has been highly researched and written about for some time. Doing a simple search of the words leader or leadership can see this. Amazon has over ten thousand books on this subject. The plethora of material available on general leadership theories makes research less taxing on people who seek information in this topic. However, when we

narrow the scope from general leader or leadership search to a more focused or concentrated search to leadership theology or biblical leadership there is surprisingly a much smaller collection of books and articles on this topic. "An online search of the ATLA and ProQuest Religion databases using the terms leadership theology, church leadership, and equivalent terms resulted in twenty-three relevant articles."<sup>1</sup> There is a severe contrast between the accessibility of general leadership material and sparse supply of material on leadership theology.

This says that the church has not done much work in this field on leadership theology. Whereas, the church has labored and developed much material in other areas of importance for the church, however, this is not the case in this area. The problem with so little work done by the church on this topic is that leadership is important to the survival of every organization, be it educational, political, business etc... Without more resources on leadership within the church, we run the risk of the church becoming something other than the church Christ died for.

Gary Yuhl says in his book on leadership "Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a process whereby intentional influence is exerted over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization." The numerous definitions of leadership appear to have little else in common. They differ in many respects, including who exerts influence, the intended purpose of the influence, the manner in which influence is exerted, and the outcome of the influence attempt. The differences are not just a case of scholarly nit-picking; they reflect deep disagreement and identification of leaders and

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<sup>1</sup> Russell L. Huizing, "Bringing Christ To The Table Of Leadership: Moving Towards A Theology Of Leadership," *Journal Of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol. 5 No. 2, Fall 2011: 57-58.

leadership processes. Researchers who differ in their conception of leadership select different phenomena to investigate and interpret the results in different ways. Researchers who have a very narrow definition of leadership are less likely to discover things that are unrelated to or inconsistent with their initial assumption about effective leadership.”<sup>2</sup>

Yuhl seems to be saying that the definition on general leadership theory is so vast and has little or no continuity among them. So if this is so, how can we take general leadership theory and apply it to the biblical context? Yuhl goes on to say, “Researchers usually define leadership according to their individual perspective and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them.”<sup>3</sup>

So leadership can mean different things to different people at different times and all coming up with different answers but saying this is leadership. This is very confusing to say the least for the church that seems at times to be taking her cues from general leadership theory.

Warren G. Bennis in his book *Leadership Theory and Administrative Behavior* says, “Of all the hazy and confounding in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly continues for top nomination. And, ironically, probably more has been written and less is known about leadership than any other topic in the behavioral sciences. Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it: leadership, power, status, authority,

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<sup>2</sup> Gary Yuhl, *Leadership and Organizations*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2013), 2.

<sup>3</sup> Yuhl, *Leadership and Organizations*, 2.

rank, prestige, influence, control, manipulation, domination, and so forth, and still the concept is not sufficiently defined.”<sup>4</sup>

Bennis made the above statement over fifty years ago and still the lack of clarity when it comes to leadership theory or leadership definitions are still not clearly defined. Yuhl gives definitions for general leadership as the following:

- Leadership is the behavior of an individual...directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal.
- Leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization.
- Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement.
- Leadership is about articulating visions, embodying values, and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished.
- Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose.
- Leadership is the ability to step outside the culture...to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive.
- Leadership is the process of making sense of what people are doing together so that people will understand and be committed.
- Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence motivate, and enable others contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization.<sup>5</sup>

Because leadership has so many different meanings to people, some theorists question whether it is even useful as a scientific construct. Nevertheless, most behavioral scientists and practitioners seem to believe leadership is a real

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<sup>4</sup> Warren G. Bennis, “Leadership Theory and Administrative Behavior: The Problem With Authority,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (1959): 259-301.

<sup>5</sup> Yuhl, *Leadership and Organizations*.

phenomenon that is important for effectiveness of organizations. Interest in the subject continues to increase, and the deluge of articles and books about leadership shows no sign of abating.<sup>6</sup>

With all of this information by Yuhl and Bennis on definitions for general leadership theory, and the creation of new terminology that is ever evolving seems to justify why things are so convoluted when it comes to leadership in the church. There is no set definition on leadership provided by general leadership theory. As can be seen by the definitions above, there is a lack of consistency. If the definition on leadership provided from outside the biblical context is hazy and ever changing then that would suggest that it is the same within the context of the church. Why is this the case? Because we see that leadership in the biblical context is not clearly defined. The word leader or leadership is not found in the Bible. However, the concept is easily visible.

### **Leadership Theology**

The name leadership theology suggests something different than general leadership theory. Theology in its basic sense is the study of God as contained in scripture. It comes from two Greek words Theos, which means God, and Logos, which mean the study of the word. The theology of leadership then, is the study of God, through the word of God; based on how the word of God captures those God has chosen to lead His people. A theology of leadership then is leadership that is rooted in the bible and what the bible has to say about leadership. Furthermore,

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<sup>6</sup> Yuhl, *Leadership and Organizations*, 3.

scripture is the lens through which we develop our views of leadership. John Wesley believed “in all cases, the church is to be judged by the scripture, not the scripture by the church.”<sup>7</sup> Wesley read other books besides the Bible, but he believed at the core of all decisions or direction was the Bible and what the God of the book revealed to His people. This understanding is what Wesley sought to use as a guide for making decisions in any area of life.

In the biblical sense, leaders were more times than not, men from the nation of Israel and God called them to lead his people from a life of sin (trespassing the law). Women on the other hand were viewed in a more passive and subservient role. So the context of biblical leadership was very narrow in scope as opposed to general leadership theory. Everyone could not be a leader in the nation of Israel. You were either called by God into leadership as was the case for Abram in Genesis 12:1-2. God said to Abram “leave your country, your people, and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you a great nation...” Other examples of people God called from the Hebrew people or the nation of Israel was Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, and many others.

People born into leadership within the nation of Israel can be seen through the example of Isaac. Ishmael was the oldest son born to Abraham and Hagar, the servant of Abraham’s wife. However the Lord said to Abraham in Genesis 17:20-21, “And as for Ishmael I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you...” God clearly distinguishes to Abraham, that Isaac was whom he

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph Benson, “The Works of the Rev. John Wesley,” Volume 15.



called for his purpose. Other examples of people born into leadership can be seen in the Levitical priesthood, and kings of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel. If a person was not from a particular tribe or clan then they were not eligible for leadership as a priest or king.

In the New Testament we see a shift in people God called as leaders that were not a part of the nation of Israel but reflect people outside of the Israelite nation. A good example of this can be in the Samaritan woman in John 4:28-39. Because this woman received the living water, which was Jesus Christ, verse 39 says, “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony...”

Another example of the Lord calling someone that was outside of the nation of Israel to lead is seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. The hero in the story is not the priest who saw the man beaten but decided to pass by on the other side of the road. The hero of the parable is the Samaritan who sees the man in need and stops to help. Jesus asked the question in verse 36, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers.” The Pharisee responded to the question of Jesus by saying in verse 37, “The one who has mercy on him.” The Samaritan is the most unlikely person to show mercy but does what others would not do. The Samaritan is the leader in the text because also in verse 37, Jesus says, “Go and do likewise.” The Samaritan is the example of what is to be done in showing mercy. Lastly, another example of leadership that comes from outside of Israel is Cornelius, the first Gentile conversion in Acts 10. He was an officer of the Italian band who God uses Peter to facilitate his conversion and because of

Cornelius's conversion to Jesus Christ his whole household is baptized and saved. This conversion starts a ripple effect when it came to the conversion of Gentiles.

In all of these examples of leadership whether leaders were called, or whether born, every situation has a context from which leadership emerges. God did not call leaders from every walk of life there has always been a context, from Hebrews to Israelites to believers in Jesus Christ or the Christian Church. The word "church" in Greek is *ekklesia* which means *assembly, from ek "out of" and klesia, "a calling"* (kleo, "to call"), was used among the Greeks of a body of citizens "gathered" to discuss the affairs of state. In the Septuagint it is used to distinguish the gathering of Israel...<sup>8</sup> Ekklesia or church meant called out ones. Their assembly was different from other assemblies in that this assembly was called out by Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to "Go and make disciples of all nations..."

The challenge for this church (*ekklesia*), when it comes to general leadership theory, is to take ideologies from other assemblies such as business, education, political etc., and apply them to the context of the church. For example, we hear things from church leaders today who some say that the church is a business and it should be run as a business. If we believe this ideology then we will see more church leaders operating the church like a business. The bottom line or goal of a business is all about expanding and profits or money gained. We get whoever has the best qualifications for the position to lead the company forward in achieving its objectives. No one ever asks if a person believes in Jesus or about the integrity of an individual. All that is required is if you went to the best schools and what degrees you may hold. However, just to distribute food to widows there was a standard of who would lead

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<sup>8</sup> Vine's Greek New Testament Dictionary.

this charge. Acts 6: 3, “Brothers, select seven men from among you, men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.” The apostles appear to be more concerned with the spiritual or internal qualifications of these men rather than external appearances and accomplishments. “Allowing General Leadership theory to be the director of the development of Christian Leadership theory eventually undermines the value of Christian revelation speaking into these critical areas of organizational development and leadership. Such leaders might use approaches to leadership that cause the church to be widely successful-in non-scriptural terms-but bereft of any indication of its association to the Kingdom of Jesus.”<sup>9</sup> So in essence when the church applies techniques from other context, such as business and the like, the church may be viewed as successful because of its growth in material ways but unsuccessful in the sense of spiritual discipleship growth.

So we see that theological leadership and general leadership theory are two opposing views. General leadership theory is not grounded in scripture. In many ways it looks at leadership traits and characteristics in leaders who may or may not have been followers of Jesus Christ. General leadership theory looks at leadership through the lenses of military personalities, political leaders and leaders from other fields. Common characteristics in them are lifted up and highlighted as leadership traits. The challenge is many times it has no basis in scripture.

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<sup>9</sup> Russell L. Huizing, “Bringing Christ To The Table Of Leadership: Moving Towards A Theology Of Leadership,” *Journal Of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol. 5 No. 2, Fall 2011: 62.

### **The Importance of Discipleship**

The word disciple in the Greek “mathetes” which many times is translated ‘pupil or apprentice.’ An apprentice is a learner that is under the supervision of someone that can teach them skills and or a trade of a profession for a certain amount of years. This is done so that the learner may reach the craft or skills of the teacher or the one being followed. A disciple in essence is a learner or a student. This word is not only related to the church but the word disciple is associated with other religions, and leaders of every type and culture. However, when we speak of discipleship in the context of the church it is always about followers or students of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is very important to underscore when we talk about leadership and the church. At their core leaders are disciples or followers of Jesus and if leaders are not followers of Jesus, then they should not be in the position of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship is a part of the foundational structure of the church of Jesus Christ that is reflected in scripture. Matthew 28:18-19 “And Jesus came to them and said all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.” This particular text clearly expresses the significant role the church has when it comes to making disciples. Leaders within the church are first Disciples of Christ. Christ commanded them to “go” this word in Greek is ‘poreuo’ which means, “To depart, go, to travel; especially

to remove.”<sup>10</sup> So in other words, the disciples that we get should be intentionally sought out. Then we are to teach. Teaching in the Greek is “didasko” means ‘absolutely to give instruction, to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses, to be a teacher, to teach one, to impart instruction, instill doctrine into one.’<sup>11</sup> Obey in Greek is ‘tereo’ means ‘to attend to carefully, take care of, guard, charge, hold, keep, preserve, watch, observe, reserve.’<sup>12</sup> We are commanded by Christ to impart instruction to the nations so they can instruct or teach others to hold fast to the doctrines that he taught his disciples.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said “Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”<sup>13</sup> Leadership without Christ is leadership without discipleship. Discipleship is one of the primary reasons the church exist. If we are not making disciples of Jesus Christ then we need to stop calling ourselves the church of Jesus Christ. For Bonhoeffer, if we are followers of Christ then the end result will be discipleship. We cannot have a relationship with Christ if we do not follow him. Following other ideologies that spring from general leadership theory is not the same as being a follower of Jesus Christ. Discipleship for Bonhoeffer is bound to Christ. Biblical leadership then is leaders who lead because they have been discipled and not the other way around.

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<sup>10</sup> Strong’s Concordance G4198.

<sup>11</sup> Strong’s Concordance G1321.

<sup>12</sup> Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, G5083

<sup>13</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1995), 59.

Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 16:24, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself take up his cross and follow me.” Discipleship is about leaving the old life to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Disciples cannot stay where they are and call themselves followers. The invitation by Christ is to “follow me” and that is impossible to do if one stays where they are. Most examples in scripture of someone invited by Christ to follow him, each had to leave something behind in order to do so. Levi had to leave the tax booth, and Simon had to leave his fishing net. Following Christ or being a disciple requires a response or decision that everyone must make for him or herself. The point is that discipleship without fellowship of Christ is not discipleship at all. It is leaving the familiar for the unknown. It is blind trust, believing that wherever we may go, the Lord will take care of our every need.

### **Deficiency in Discipleship**

The Chicago Tribune reported a story back in 1997 about a mother who left her nine children alone. The ages of her children ranged from eight months to eleven years old. These children were left in an apartment filled with trash and feces. Someone that lived in the apartment complex report the incident to the authorities and the children were placed into protective custody and the mother was charged with neglect and malfeasance. One wonders if the church at times is guilty of neglecting new believers in Jesus Christ. New believers are sometimes placed in leadership roles in the church based on what they may have skills or expertise in secular society but such person have not always been disciplined. They like the minor children that were

left by their adult parent and we too have left the new leaders un-disciplined and fending for themselves.

The Barna Group conducted a survey that listed six major themes as proof that the Christian faith has been deficient in the transmission of the gospel. Three of the themes highlighted were “The Christian church is becoming less theologically literate, Christians are becoming more ingrown and less outreached-oriented, and the influence of Christianity on culture and individual lives is largely invisible”<sup>14</sup> Thom Rainer agrees with the Barna Group and adds “the number one reason for the decline in church attendance is that members attend with less frequency than they did just a few years ago.”<sup>15</sup> A more recent study by the Barna Group, which focused on the millennials from ages sixteen to twenty-nine years old, says that the newer generation is more cynical and resistant to Christianity than was the case a decade ago.

Leonard Sweet, a well-known historian and scholar says that “We are likely the last generation to be familiar with the Christian story and for whom churches have cultural significant. And you will die, leaving behind a culture for whom the Christian story will be completely unknown.”<sup>16</sup> John Wesley appears to share a similar fate and concern when it came to the Methodist movement. Wesley’s observation was “I am not afraid that the people called Methodist should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a

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<sup>14</sup> 2010 Barna Group, accessed September 5, 2014, <https://www.barna.org/culture-articles/462-six-megathemes-emerge-from-2010>.

<sup>15</sup> Thom S. Rainer, “The Number One Reason The Decline in Church Attendance and Five Ways to Address It” August 19, 2013 <http://thomrainer.com/2013/08/the-number-one-reason-for-the-decline-in-church-attendance-and-five-ways-to-address-it>.

<sup>16</sup> Leonard Sweet, *So Beautiful: Divine Design for Life and the Church* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Publishers, 2009), Kindle location 238.

dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold to the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out.”<sup>17</sup> For Wesley the solution against decline and becoming a “dead sect” was the class meeting system. This system was for the expressed purpose of making disciples. Wesley saw how important discipleship was to the life and longevity of the church of Christ.

Adam Clark, a well-known Methodist historian, writes about the difference between John Wesley and small group discipleship and the followers of George Whitefield. He says “It was by this means [the formation of small groups] that we have been enabled to establish permanent and hold churches over the world. Mr. Wesley saw the necessity of this from the beginning. Mr. Whitefield, when he separated from Wesley, did not follow it. What was the consequence? The fruit of Mr. Whitefield’s labors died with himself: Mr. Wesley’s fruit remains, grows, increases, and multiplies exceedingly.”<sup>18</sup>

According to Clark, Whitefield would later make this following statement about John Wesley and his method of small group discipleship, “My brother Wesley acted wisely-the souls that were awoken under his ministry be joined in classes and thus preserved the fruits of his labor. This I neglected and my people are a rope of sand.”<sup>19</sup> Whitefield seems to have acknowledged a great mistake he made was his failure to put a system in place that would make disciples. This deficiency on his part

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<sup>17</sup> John Wesley, “Thoughts Upon Methodism,” *The Form and Power of Religion: John Wesley on Methodist Vitality* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Holland M. McTyeire, *History of Methodism* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, 1904), 204.

<sup>19</sup> McTyeire, *History of Methodism*, 204.



was a grave mistake. The modern church seems to be making the same mistakes when it comes to discipleship not being a priority.

With all that has been said about general leadership theory and biblical leadership, in the context of biblical leadership we have been making leaders but not disciples. We must make disciples before one can be a leader. Christ said to “make disciples of all nations” and not to make leaders. This is why the church is out of step. Because we have been deficient in discipleship, we see more leaders in the church but not disciples. “Discipleship apart from Jesus may be many things, but it is not transformational. Jesus is the only rabbi who has the power to transform lives.”<sup>20</sup>

The Apostle Paul said that we are not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. That word transformed in the Greek means “metamorphoo,” to change into another form (met, implying change, and morpho, “form”).<sup>21</sup> The word “matamorphoo” brings to mind metamorphosis like butterflies and tadpoles changing into something altogether different. Once transformation has taken place it’s hard to imagine what it used to be before transformation. Transformation is more than a surface-level alteration; it’s actually becoming something else entirely.”<sup>22</sup>

As the church of Jesus Christ we have become deficient in the area of discipleship through the transformation of lives. We have learned to specialize in other things like building churches, preaching sermons, programs and raising money

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<sup>20</sup> Eric Geiger, Michael Kelley, Philip Nation, *Transformational Discipleship: How People Really Grow* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 9.

<sup>21</sup> Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the New Testament Words Strong’s, G3339.

<sup>22</sup> Geiger, Kelley, and Nation, *Transformational Discipleship: How People Really Grow*, 9.

but we have not been proficient in doing one of the main reason for which we exist “making disciples.” Since we have been deficient in this area of ministry we do not see transformation within the leadership of the church. Many leaders see the temporal affairs of the church as their main function but do not see discipleship as the main focus. John Wesley said of discipleship, “The Church changes the world not by making converts but by making disciples.”<sup>23</sup>

### **Jesus Our Model**

Biblical discipleship as seen in scripture is more about servanthood. The greatest example of this can be seen in the life of Christ. Jesus said in Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Another scripture Christ gave to evidence this servant model of biblical leadership or discipleship is found in Luke 22:27, “For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.” The lesson Jesus is teaching his disciples is that he as their leader or teacher is a servant. He never uses the word leader or leadership when dealing with biblical leadership. Christ wanted his disciples to learn what it meant to be a servant by following him and no other tactics.

Mark 10:45 also say of Christ that he will “...give his life a ransom for many.” This portion of the scriptures reflects the sacrificial aspect of the life of Christ. This is a part of Christ that many today may not like to follow. Alan Hirsch makes this point about modern church members “We have been profoundly discipled

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<sup>23</sup> Quotter, “John Wesley,” accessed August 4, 2015, [http://www.quotter.net/the-church-changes-the-world-not-by-making-converts-but-by-making-disciples-quote-by-john-wesley\\_308043](http://www.quotter.net/the-church-changes-the-world-not-by-making-converts-but-by-making-disciples-quote-by-john-wesley_308043).

every day by a sophisticated system called media and advertisement. The goal of which is to create desire. Anyone who comes to Jesus in a Western context is already a well disciplined consumer, and it is a religion! Consumerism is defined by what we consume. It is the search for meaning, identity, purpose, and belonging tied to the consumption of products. Consumerism is the alternative of religion of our day. You can't build a church on consumerism. They will desert you at a moment's notice because they have no commitments beyond their own needs."<sup>24</sup> Advertisement and media causes desire in people for things that is to give the consumer satisfaction in some way. Consumers believe they are entitled to have what they want, or to have it their way, like Burger King. Christ is the epitome of what it means to sacrifice. He came to do the will of his Father and not his own. Because Christ is our model we must learn to have a life of sacrifice. Sacrifice is an act of slaughtering an animal or person of surrendering a possession as an offering to God...<sup>25</sup> To do the will of the teacher we are to follow. "Discipleship without Christ is a way of our own choosing."<sup>26</sup> Just as discipleship without sacrifice is not following Christ but it's following something else. Sacrifice in the biblical sense is about denying self or surrendering our will for the will of our teacher, Jesus.

Jesus as our model is also about relationship. Christ spent time with his disciples pouring into them the word of God. He touched their lives in such a way

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<sup>24</sup> Alan Hirsch, "Disciple-Maker," (video, Verge Conference, Austin, TX, 2010), [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN3oA5AETul](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN3oA5AETul).

<sup>25</sup> Webster's Dictionary.

<sup>26</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Cost of Discipleship*, 64.

that is caused them to emulate their teacher. We also must spend time with those who are in leadership, pouring into them the Word of God.

In closing, how we view leadership in this 21<sup>st</sup> century culture, we must truly embrace what it means to be a disciple of Christ. And we must allow scripture to define how the church makes disciples and who are to be her leaders. Other fields of study have contributed to what they view as leadership within their context. Our challenge is to not be so quick to transplant other definitions and views of leadership and force it to fit in the context of the church. We must make disciple that look like Christ and not like something else. Only by following Christ, who is our only model. Thomas Aquinas said, “In the end, creation is nothing other than a life in conformity with the icon Christ, nothing other than the path of discipleship.”<sup>27</sup> If leadership in the church of Jesus Christ is our goal, discipleship must be our objective.

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<sup>27</sup> Robert Barron, *A Study of the DePotentia of Thomas Aquinas in Light of the Dogmatik of Paul Tillich: Creation as Discipleship* (San Francisco, CA: Mellen Research University Press, 1993), 485.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

The fascination of leadership has existed since the beginning of civilization. From the great empires of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, and up until this present day leadership has been a topic of major interest. Leadership has been a part of the fabric of human existence since the dawn of civilization. Great philosophers have given their view on what leadership is and who can be a leader. Plato believed leadership was for a few with elite wisdom should lead others. Aristotle said, “From the moment of birth, some are marked for subjugation and others for command.” Leadership is not just relegated to one area of life but leadership is peppered or sprinkled in every area, be it business, education, politics, religion etc. This chapter will examine the most popular leadership theories and to provide a general overview of each. Secondly, this chapter will provide a modicum of pros and cons of each theory as it relates to its usefulness within the context of the church.

#### **Leadership Theories**

##### *The Great Man Theory*

The Great Man Theory of leadership is a belief that leadership is not something that can be taught but leadership is something that is innate or a person is born with. This particular theory came out of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish writer and son

of a Presbrytian stonemason, is the person given credit for its inception. Under this view, leadership traits are inborn or existing from birth. Other “factors such as your upbringing, education, experiences are only modeling your leadership abilities; they are not responsible for making you a leader.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore, all leaders would be considered men that were predestined by God to lead. They would come from a certain aristocratic level of existence. Under this theory there would be no climbing the ladder of success and becoming a leader but leadership is only derived at because of the family you were born into.

The Great Man Theory was titled such because it looked at male leadership only. Women were not taken into consideration because at that time only men were in positions of authority. This particular theory looked at leaders mainly in the military. People like, Muhammad, Shakespeare, Luther, Rousseau, Pericles and Napoleon, are highlighted as great leaders or heroes. Thomas Carlyle believed, “The history of the world was but the biography of great men.”<sup>2</sup> Most if not all of the great men lifted up by Carlyle were not men from others races but of European decent. Carlyle and the Great Man Theory was the product of their time. As we read Carlyle’s work one gathers that he was a racist with racist views as so many where of that era. Carlyle’s Great Man was to be lifted up for other men to see and to aspire to be like even though the heroes lifted up where born to be great men and not made. This theory of how leaders where born started to become less popular and fell out of favor among historians after World War II.

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<sup>1</sup> Leadership Central, “Great Man Theory,” accessed June 24, 2016, <http://www.leadership-central.com/great-man-theory.html#axzz4CQ0OVtwN>.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Carlyle, “The Hero as Divinity” in: *On Heroes and Hero Worship* (London, UK: James Fraser, 1840).

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was a famous English philosopher, anthropologist and sociologist of the Victorian era. He was in opposition of the Great Man Theory. He believed that great men were a product of their environment and the society in which they came from. The society these men came from shaped and molded them and as a result they became great men or great leaders. He coined the phrase, “survival of the fittest.”<sup>3</sup> He believed that the one who survived until the end was the one who would be remembered.

The Great Man Theory suggests that an individual leader is important and is the singular factor that determines success. Therefore, total credit is attributed to the leader of the Great Man of that time. The real problem with this point of view is that it does not take into consideration the other people or the supporting cast that were extremely instrumental in the positive outcome because the only person being lifted up is the Great Man.

The church must be very cautious of believing that a singular leader can make all the difference in the success of the ministry. No one person can do everything. Real success in ministry requires several people working together as a team. The Great Man Theory appears to apply too much pressure or weight for success on the shoulders of one person. This kind of point of view would be detrimental to the leader who sees himself or herself as the “Messiah” and is detrimental to the church setting such an unrealistic expectation. We see that this theory is so engraved in the fabric of the church to the point that the leader is lifted up and the leader is worshiped by the congregation. The sin in all of this is idolatry. God is not seen as the one who make the difference but the Great man

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<sup>3</sup> Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Biology* (London, UK: Williams and Norgate, 1864).

is given the sole credit. And the congregation is hindered from seeing what a difference the many can make on the outcome of ministry and not just one person.

### *Trait Approach*

“The Trait Approach to leadership was one of the earliest theories of leadership. Although it is not a fully articulated theory with well-developed hypotheses, the trait approach formed the basis of most early leadership research. This approach focuses on the personal attributes (or traits) of leaders, such as physical and personality characteristics, competencies, and values. It views leadership solely from the perspective of the individual leader. Implicit in this approach is the assumption that traits produce patterns of behavior that are consistent across situations. That is, leadership traits are considered to be enduring characteristics that people are born with and that remain relatively stable over time.”<sup>4</sup>

It is important to note that the “Trait Approach or Trait Based Leadership” is an outgrowth of the Great Man Theory. This point of view maintained that leadership traits were innate or inherited qualities. The originator of looking at traits in leadership was Francis Galton. In his book “Hereditary Genius” Galton says, “Characteristics cling to families.”<sup>5</sup> Galton would later make clear his view of what he meant by this statement. He, like Thomas Carlyle, would study leadership exclusively from the perspective of an Englishmen. Galton says, “I have taken little notice in this book of modern men of eminence who are not English, or at least well known to Englishmen. I feared, if I

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<sup>4</sup> John W. Fleenor, “The Trait Approach to Leadership,” accessed August 4, 2015, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272491910\\_TRAIT\\_APPROACH\\_TO\\_LEADERSHIP](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272491910_TRAIT_APPROACH_TO_LEADERSHIP), 830.

<sup>5</sup> Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius* (London, UK: CMilliam and Company, 1892).



included large classes of foreigners, that I should make glaring errors. It requires a great deal of labor to hunt out relationships, even with the facilities of afforded to a countrymen having access to persons acquainted with the various families; much more would have been difficult to hunt out the kindred of foreigners. I should have especially liked to investigate the biographies of Italians and Jews, both of whom appear to be rich in families of high intellectual breads. Germany and America are also full of interest it is a little less so with respect to France, where the Revolution and the guillotine made havoc among the progeny of her abler races.”<sup>6</sup>

Francis Galton, clearly is selective or limited in his research. He is only looking or would like to study attributes in people of a certain races, English, Italians, Jews, Germans and Americans. This bias leaves out leadership attributes or traits from other races. The origin of the Trait Approach by Francis Galton should make persons of African descent reluctant about embracing such a theory, which at its inception did not include people of African descent. Galton is the originator of the term “eugenics” and he believed that Blacks were inferior to the Anglo-Saxon race. Galton said “The truth appears to be that individuals of the mental caliber I have just described are much more exceptional in the negro than in the Anglo- Saxon race, and that average negroes possess too little intellect, self-reliance, and self-control to make it possible for them to sustain the burden of any respectable form of civilization without a large measure of external guidance and support.”<sup>7</sup> So leaders from the African race, is not common but an exception. Galton seems to believe that people of African descent need leaders from the European race for leadership.

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<sup>6</sup> Galton, *Hereditary Genius*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Francis Galton, letter to the Editor of the Times, June 5, 1873 “Africa for the Chinese.”

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century a well-known psychologist, in the study of the Trait Theory Approach, Gordon Allport categorized over 18,000 different traits that described personalities. He along with Henry Odbert, another psychologist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, did this work together, which spanned about a thirty-year period. Allport wanted to make the research of traits more easily manageable and usable. This method of categorizing was to be used as a tool of analysis in order to get a general idea of one's personality.

The chart listed below is the reflection of the key traits and skills of leadership that were identified by Ralph Stogdill, another well-known psychologist in the area of leadership are as follows:

<b>Traits</b>	<b>Skills</b>
- Adaptive	- Clever
- Alert	- Conceptually skilled
- Ambitious and achievement- oriented	- Creative
- Assertive	- Diplomatic and tactful
- Cooperative	- Fluent in speaking
- Decisive	- Knowledgeable about group task
- Dependable	- Organized (administrative ability)
- Dominant	- Persuasive
- Energetic (high activity level)	- Socially skilled
- Persistent	
- Self-confident	

- Tolerant of stress
- Willing to assume responsibility<sup>8</sup>

One of the positive observations of the Trait Approach to leadership was that this method acknowledged key characteristics or qualities of successful leaders. It was believed that by this theory being able to identify these qualities it could be very instrumental in placing leaders into positions of leadership. This approach to leadership has been used within the military, the business community and even the church. Within the context of the church, this tool could be helpful in identifying leadership characteristics.

However, the problem with the Trait Approach to leadership, as stated earlier, is that it believed that the characteristics of leadership were innate and only people of European descent could be leaders. Leaders are born with the leadership characteristics in them at birth. The view of this theory was that by knowing this people could be trained or developed into leaders because of the leadership traits they possess at birth. However, if a person did not possess these traits there was no time or attention given for the development of leadership potential. Therefore, no attention was given to development of people of African descent. They were never considered as possessing leadership traits.

Another problem of the Trait Theory is that it produced so many different traits. This approach produced almost as many traits as there where studies conducted. The real issue was that there are no consistent traits that could be acknowledged. Many studies were found inconclusive. A leader could very well have identified certain traits, however; the absence of those traits on the other hand did not mean he or she was not a leader. Such

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<sup>8</sup> Ralph Stogdill, *Leadership, Skills and Traits* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2008).

inconsistency would be dangerous to totally pushing this theory of leadership on a congregation.

### *Behavioral Theory*

The father of the Behavioral Theory of leadership is a man by the name of B. F. Skinner. This particular theory came along in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This theory took a very different approach to leadership than the other theories discussed. The Behavioral Theory took the position that leaders were not born but that leaders were made. This particular view maintained that anyone could be taught to be a leader and the leader did not come into the world with leadership qualities born within them but they could learn how to be a leader. The Behavioral Theory looks at what leaders did or how they behaved in any given situation and teaching them the most effective response.

B. F. Skinner was a well-known psychologist who believed that ‘the universe operates in mechanistic terms. He views the scheme of things as orderly, regular, predictable and hence controllable.’<sup>9</sup> Skinner believed in behavioral engineering, in his own words he said “Give me a child and I will shape him into anything.”<sup>10</sup> John B. Watson, the predecessor of Skinner, basically held the same view. Watson is known similar quote, “Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I’ll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select-doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes even beggarman and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities,

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<sup>9</sup> L. Stevenson, *Seven Theories of Human Nature* (New York, NY: Oxford Press, 1974), 110-111.

<sup>10</sup> B. F. Skinner, Tim’s Blog, accessed August 4, 2015, <https://timizzo.wordpress.com/2014/10/23/give-me-a-child-and-i-will-shape-him-into-anything-b-f-skinner/>.

vocations, and race of his ancestors.”<sup>11</sup> For Watson and Skinner the power of controlling the environment was a way of conditioning an animal or human to respond a certain way. Skinner was known for his “Skinner Box” or operant conditioning. This mechanism had a bar or key designed for a rat to press to obtain food or water. It determined the behavior of the animal through positive or negative reinforcement. All of these responses were engineered or planned, therefore, the outcome is manipulated by its reinforcement. Skinner said “Behavior is determined by its consequences.”<sup>12</sup>

In the 1950’s and the 1960’s two major studies were conducted by Ohio State University and the University of Michigan as it relates to behavioral leadership. Ohio State’s research focused on questionnaires to leaders and their subordinates. The questionnaires were known as the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LDBQ) and the Supervisor Behavior Description Questionnaire (SDBQ). The results from this research found two characteristics that were independent of one another. Consideration or people oriented behavioral leaders which says leaders inspire employees to meet the organizations goal by helping them feel better about their work.<sup>13</sup>

Initiating structure or task oriented leaders says that leaders are driven by meeting deadlines, objectives outlined by the organization. The leader is focused on the end results and completing a task.

The Michigan study was done by the famous psychologist, Dr. Rensis Likert. It identified three characteristics of effective leadership. Two of them were the same as the

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<sup>11</sup> J. B. Watson, *Behaviorism*, rev. ed. (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press).

<sup>12</sup> A-Z Quotes, accessed August 4, 2014, “Behavior is determined by its consequences,” <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/1377833>.

<sup>13</sup> Eric Gill, “Leadership is Learned,” [online.stu.edu](http://online.stu.edu), November 25, 2014.

Ohio State study. The third was called participative leadership or democratic leadership which says that leaders will engage the team in the decision making process, will consider the teams input or ideas, but the leader reserves the right in the final decision. The result of this style of leadership makes the team feel more involved in the process, creative and efficient in the completion of the goals to the organization.

One of the positive aspects of this theory is that it marked the shift in who could become a leader. As stated earlier, under the Great Man Theory and the Trait Theory, leaders were European and male. All other ethnicities or genders were not even considered. However, under the Behavioral Theory leaders are made and not born. The view of this theory is that if leadership behaviors can be identified then they can be taught and learned.

The problem with behavioral leadership is its connection with behaviorism, which believes that it can manipulate the behavior of people by rewarding and punishing them for certain behaviors. The notion of being able to control or determine the outcome can be seen as trying to play the role of God. The church is not God and should not be in the business of manipulating people to be something that God may not have intended them to be.

### *Situational Leadership Theory*

Situational Leadership Theory, which also called Contingency Theory says, “Effective leadership occurs when the leader can accurately diagnose the development level of subordinates in a task situation and then exhibit the prescribed leadership style

that matches the situation.”<sup>14</sup> In a nutshell situational leadership theory focuses on the leadership in different or changing situations. There is no one situation when it comes to leadership that fits every leader. Different situations call for different types of leadership. This theory is not a cookie cutter approach to leadership. The fundamental distinction of this theory is that situations are different and leaders need to be able to adapt to the situation in order to help his or her subordinates. For leadership to be effective, it must be flexible with different styles to meet the needs of those that are underneath the leadership. In essence this theory is all about the subordinate or follower. Whatever level of maturity the follower exhibits the leader adapts accordingly for the benefit of the follower.

The Situational Theory as stated above is driven by the follower or subordinate reaching a level of maturity and autonomy. Therefore, the role of the leader is to help raise the follower to a high degree of commitment and a high degree of competency. “Competence deals with the skill level, ability, performance of the follower. Commitment addresses the motivation, endurance, work ethics of the follower.”<sup>15</sup> Dr. Theodore Peterson, of Idaho State University, addresses methods on the part of the leader to elevate the follower’s commitment and competency. Peterson talks about the leaders need to be delegating, supportive, coaching, and directing towards the follower. Directing style “the employee needs clear, concise directions on how to complete a task and little nurturing support in order to be successful. This style is useful for a new employee or an employee charged with completing a task that is new to them. Coaching style combines both high supportive and high directive behavior. This style is ideal for employee development. It

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<sup>14</sup> Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Pub. 2013), 119.

<sup>15</sup> Nuah Tarigan, “Managing the Nonprofit Organization vs. the Theory and Practice of Leadership,” *IJHAS* vol.2, no 4 2012:122.

provides the employee with clear direction but also allows the manager to provide support in order for the employee to become a master at their job. Supporting style actively participating with the employee; there is a low level of directive behavior but a high level of support. The manager works alongside the employee. This style is useful for a seasoned employee who may need a moral boost. Delegating style is low in both supportive behavior and directive behavior. This style is the ultimate preference for managers who want to give their trusted employees autonomy and build their skill set.”<sup>16</sup> This causes the leader to not only adapt but to be more in tuned to the personal need of the follower (See chart on following page).

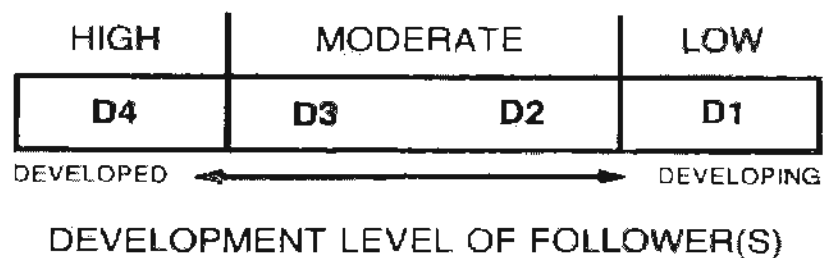
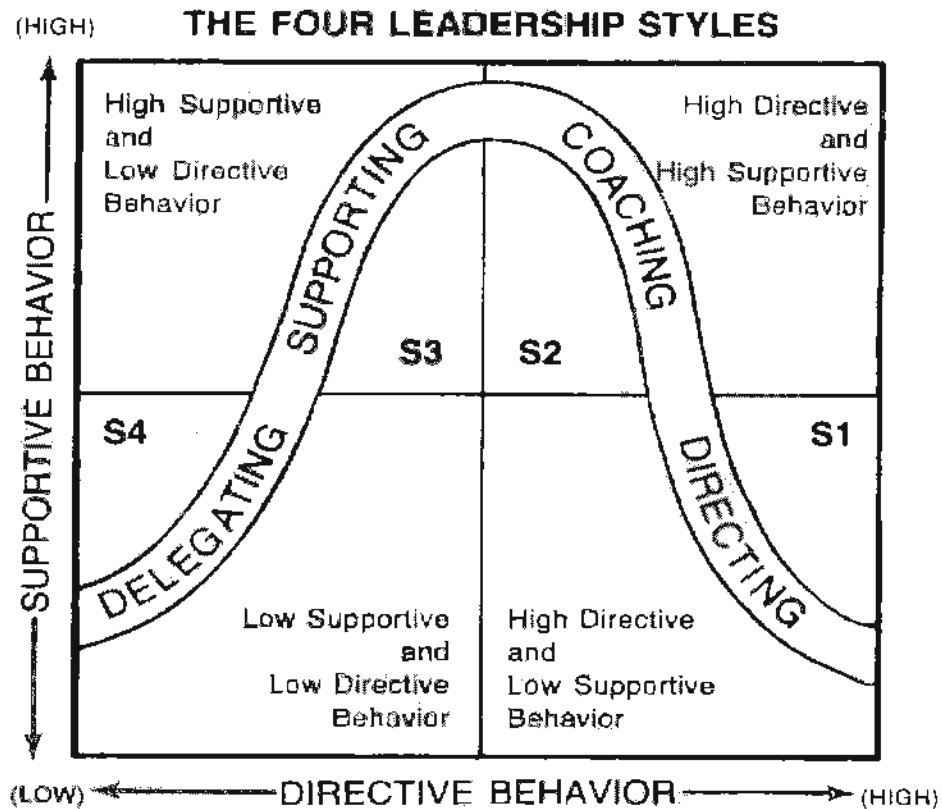
A good example of the prescriptive nature of situational leadership can be seen in the treatment of employees. Not all employees are treated the same. Under this theory a new employee is regarded differently than an employee that has been on the job for ten years. The leader may need to do more coaching with a new employee until he or she reaches a level confidence. However, an employee that has been on the job for ten years may see the coaching approach as sign of him or her being incompetent. Under the situational theory the veteran employee may respond better to leadership that delegates more. In both of these instances the situation of the employee determines the style of leadership used.

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<sup>16</sup> Taylor Viering, “Developing Management Skills Using Situational Leadership” June 25, 2014, Corporate Learning Institute corplearning.com, accessed August 4, 2015, <http://corplearning.com/management-skills/>.



## SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP II



Situational leadership appears to be not so much from the field of psychology but from the field of business or used more by businesses. Northouse says, “400 of the Fortune 500 companies perceive situational leadership as an effective model for training leaders”<sup>18</sup> However, this approach to leadership can be very useful to the local church. Leaders being flexible to meet the needs of followers that are serving in leadership position can help the follower become more productive. The negative side to this theory is all the weight of finding out what type of situation to use to help the follower to reach his level of maturity in commitment and competency is placed on the pastor or leader of the church. No one person can do this extraordinary job by himself or herself. The need for other leaders being in position to help meet the needs of followers is an absolute must.

### *Transactional Leadership*

Transactional Leadership is also called Managerial Leadership; it is a leadership theory that “refers to the exchange relationship between leader and follower to meet their own self-interest. It may take the form of contingent reward in which the leader clarifies for the follower through direction or participation what the follower needs to do to be rewarded for the effort.”<sup>19</sup> This style of leadership can be effective in achieving goals because there is a reward for positive results. The reward is given when the goal is reached; therefore, the reward is not freely given but it is contingent upon the outcome.

The other side of this leadership theory, as it relates to contingent rewards, is that when the goal or objective is not achieved there is some type of punishment for failing to

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<sup>18</sup> Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 119.

<sup>19</sup> Bernard Bass, “Two Decades of Research and Development in Transformational Leadership,” *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 1999:10-11.

do so. This is known as contingent punishment. There is penalization or negative reinforcement for not reaching the preferred outcome. One example of contingent punishment can be seen when an employee is suspended or fired because he or she falls below performance or production expectation of quality or quantity and the goal is not met. Bernard Bass suggest that effective leadership is leadership that gets results. “The leader gets things done by making, and fulfilling, promises of recognition, pay increases, and advancement for employees who perform well. By contrast, employees who do not do good work are penalized. This transaction or exchange—this promise and reward for good performance, or threat and discipline for poor performance—characterizes effective leadership.”<sup>20</sup>

The Transactional Theory appears to have some traces of the Behavioral Theory, which was born out of behaviorism. It seems to be conditioning. Just like the Russian physiologist, Ivan Pavlov, and the experiment with the dog. Every time the dog was given food when the bell rang, it did not take long before the bell ringing conditioned the dog to expect food. At the sound of the bell the dog would salivate even when food was not given. Again, this is a conditioned response. For workers, under the transactional theory, they too are conditioned. This can be seen by rewarding them for their performance and over time the workers equates good work with a reward just like the dog who rang the bell and got food in response.

On the positive side of the transactional theory, when it comes to the church, is that it is goal oriented and sets objectives for achieving the goal. The aspect of this theory could be helpful to the church. The transactional theory also inspires or motivates

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<sup>20</sup> Bernard Bass, “From Transactional to Transformational Leadership: Learning to Share the Vision,” accessed August 4, 2015, [http://discoverthought.com/Leadership/Referencesfiles/Bass %20leadership%201990.pdf](http://discoverthought.com/Leadership/Referencesfiles/Bass%20leadership%201990.pdf), 20.

workers to do their best work by rewards or positive reinforcement. All of that is good, however, the negative, that becomes detrimental to the church, is that this theory believes in punishment or penalization of the worker when expectations are not reached. This theory can become fear driven and very stressful. The real danger in this this theory being used by the church is that the transactional theory focuses on the achievement for the organization or the business. There is a transactional exchange, the worker is rewarded for his or her work and the leader reaches the goal. However, at the end of the day this theory does not necessarily work in a church setting because what would be the reward or punishment for not reaching a goal in the Kingdom of God? Do we fire or reprimand the Christian Education Director for not making disciples? Do we reward the Evangelism Director for sharing his or her faith with someone? This theory would perhaps be good for business but problematic for the church.

### *Transformational Theory*

The phrase Transformational Leadership was coined by James V. Downton. It was expounded further by James MacGregor Burns who wrote a book entitled *Transforming Leadership: A New Pursuit of Happiness* says, “Instead of exercising power over people, transforming leaders champion and inspire followers.”<sup>21</sup> Bernard Bass went even further by saying, “Transformational Leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interest of their employees, when they generate awareness and

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<sup>21</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Transforming Leadership: A New Pursuit of Happiness* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2003), 26.

acceptance of the purpose of the mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own interest for the good of the group.”<sup>22</sup>

Both Burns and Bass see the goal of transformational leadership as the leader helping the employee raise the level of his or her work for the good of the group or the organization.

In a nutshell, transformational leadership puts a great deal of emphasis on the leaders assisting the employee in finding out who the employee is and the significant part the employee plays in the organization reaching its purpose. Transformational Leadership creates employees who are unselfish, faithful, and connected to the organization. This kind of worker achieves much more than what is expected of them and what is written in their job description. It is because of the relationship with leader that the employee or follower is transformed.

Transformational Leadership is characterized by four distinctive factors in the leader, known as the “Four I’s” that the follower is captivated in the leader. According to Bass and Avolio the “Four I’s are as follows:

1. Idealized influence: Transformational leaders become role models for the followers who admire, respect, and trust. They put followers’ needs above their own, and their behavior is consistent with the values and principles of the group.
2. Inspirational Motivation: Transformational leaders motivate by providing meaning and challenge to the tasks of followers. They arouse team spirit, are enthusiastic and optimistic, and help followers develop desirable vision for the future.
3. Intellectual Stimulation: Transformational leaders stimulate innovation and creativity. They do so by encouraging followers to question assumptions, reframe situations and approach old problems from new perspectives.

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<sup>22</sup> Bernard Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership Theory, Research, & Managerial Applications* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1990), 21.

Transforming leaders don't criticize mistakes but instead solicit solutions from followers.

4. Individualized Consideration: Transformational leaders act as coaches or mentors who foster personal development. They provide learning opportunities and a supportive climate for growth. Their coaching and mentoring are tailored to the individual needs and desires of each follower.<sup>23</sup>

The positive side to this theory for the church is that it raises the level of performance of the follower or employee by the employee being inspired by the leader for the good of the group. One way of gaging effectiveness is how well the best is brought out in a person. This aspect of Transformational Theory is a good thing. That the follower is mentored by a leader that inspires greatness in a person's performance is commendable. The church would do well to be able to inspire the performance of believers in Jesus Christ to the point that their energy, creativity, and commitment to ministry is increased. This kind of elevation would be seen as positive. However, the real concern in transformational leadership is that this theory may place too much trust in the leader even to the point of the follower emulating the leader and a blind commitment to an organizational vision and not necessarily God's vision. Also too much emphasis is placed on the leader to motivate or inspire the follower. This can cause the follower to view the leader as an idol. They get their motivation and inspiration from the leader and only the leader. This kind of leadership could cause added pressure and stress to the leader.

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<sup>23</sup> Craig Johnson, *Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership Casting Light or Shadow* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publishing, 2012), 231.

### *Servant Leadership Model*

Servant leader is an expression first used by Robert Greenleaf. Greenleaf who as from India, and spent over thirty-eight years working for the American company AT&T. Greenleaf saw a problem with the authoritarian leadership that was dominant in businesses and organizations throughout the United States. He did not believe they were working, as it should. In 1977, Greenleaf wrote a book entitled *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. In this work, Greenleaf clearly share his inspiration behind the servant leadership idea. He says he was reading the work of Herman Hesse, *Journey to the East*. Hesse, a German author, wrote the novel about a journey that a group of men made together. Leo, one of the men on the journey, is seen as the servant. Leo disappears and the group of men was unable to finish the journey because Leo the servant is no longer with them. Hesse says that Leo thought he was the servant but in reality Leo was the leader. From reading this novel, Greenleaf received the idea that real leaders are those who serve others first. This concept is the motivation behind everything Greenleaf would later write about servant leadership.

Greenleaf definition of servant leadership is as follows:

The servant-leader is servant first ... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice beings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve... after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature... The difference manifests itself in the care served.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (Atlanta, GA: The Greenleaf Center For Servant Leadership, 2008).

This definition makes it clear that Greenleaf sees leadership as an authentic desire to serve first and not serving because of what serving is going to do for the one serving. In other words there is not hidden agenda behind servant leadership. A real servant, under this definition, is not serving to manipulate people to do what he or she wants them to do but serving first is centered on meeting the needs of the one that is being served, it's unselfish. It is because of this kind of leadership that those who follow are inspired and are more incline to trust the servant leader. The servant-leader is there to serve people and build them up. Not to manipulate but to encourage and edify in all that the leader says and does.

Therefore, the question is how do we know if a person is a servant leader or not? Greenleaf provides a test in his essay "Servant as Leader." He says the "best test:" Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?" Greenleaf seems to suggest that the evidence of genuine servant leaders is seen in the follower being free to be his or her true self. The leader is not trying to make the follower a clone or carbon copy of him or herself. The leader's desire is that the follower be their original self. The second way to know if someone is a servant leader, for Greenleaf, is that servant leaders will reproduce other servant leaders. This cycle of servant-leaders reproduction would be continuous.

To better understand servant leadership, Larry Spears who worked with Robert Greenleaf, takes it a step further in his 1998 book entitled, *10 Characteristics of the Servant Leader*. Spears says that these characteristics are central to the development of servant leaders-leaders:



1. **Listening.** Leaders need to have a deep commitment to listening intently to others. Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant-leader.
2. **Empathy.** The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits.
3. **Healing.** One of the strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they also have an opportunity to "help make whole" those with whom they come in contact.
4. **Awareness.** General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness also aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leader are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed.
5. **Persuasion.** The servant-leader seeks to convince others rather than coerce compliance. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups.
6. **Conceptualization.** Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to 'dream great dreams.' The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day to day realities.
7. **Foresight.** Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present and the likely consequence of a decision for the future.
8. **Stewardship.** Peter Block has defined stewardship as "holding something in trust for another." Robert Greenleaf's view of all institutions was on in which CEOs, staffs and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society.
9. **Commitment to the Growth of People.** Servant-leaders believed that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As a result the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within the institution.
10. **Building Community.** The servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of shifting from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the

servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building communities among those who work within a given institution.<sup>25</sup>

### **Servant-Leadership as a Model for the Church**

The servant-leadership model by Robert Greenleaf has been adopted by many different establishments from schools, to health-care institutions and the business sector. The servant-leadership model has crossed-over to the church and is being practiced in the church. Robert Greenleaf's model of servant-leader in the context of the church appears to be the best suited of all theories mentioned in this work. Many scholars and pastors see servant-leadership as the model that best represent Jesus Christ as the master servant-leader. Jesus teaches on servant-leadership.

In Matthew 20:20-21, Jesus had a heated discussion with his disciples about greatness in the kingdom. To the request of the mother of James and John, she ask for one of her sons to sit on the right hand of Jesus and the other to sit on the left hand of Christ, Jesus in Matthew 20:27-28 says, "And whoever wants to be first must be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." For Christ, as it is with Greenleaf, being a servant is what comes first. Leadership is not about being served but serving others first, "servant-leader consider the needs and interest of others ahead of their own, lead with a sense of humility, create an egalitarian relationship with others, and model servant behaviors..."<sup>26</sup> Leadership is not the desire of a servant-leader but leadership is the result of serving

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<sup>25</sup> Larry C. Spears, "Practicing Servant-Leadership," *Leader to Leader*, no. 34 (Fall 2004): 7-11.

<sup>26</sup> Dan R. Ebener, David J. O'Connell, "How Might Servant Leadership Work?" *NonProfit Management and Leadership*, vol. 20, Is 3, Spring 2010: 321.

others. Because serving others is first others want to follow. It is very clear that serving is the primary motivation of the servant-leader not leading.

Leadership in the church then is reserved for those who see serving others as the primary agenda. Leaderships in the church see the benefit in serving others and not the benefit or gain to the leader. "They are motivated not by a desire for status and control but by a call to servanthood, with a primary responsibility to care for others."<sup>27</sup> The disciples, like the modern day church, may be accustomed to others serving the leader. But Jesus promotes a different paradigm for leadership when he suggest that He as the master leader or example of leadership came not for others to serve him but to serve others first.

For Greenleaf, servant-leadership is about the follower. The follower is made better and the follower is assisted in fulfilling his or her God given potential. The end result is a better follower or person. Because the person is better the community or the organization is better. Greenleaf uses as a benchmark the disadvantaged in society. He says if they are made more inconvenient then the leader is not a servant first.

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<sup>27</sup> Ebner and O'Connell, "How Might Servant Leadership Work?" 319.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

The intent of this project is to expose the leadership of Lomax Temple AME Zion Church to leadership development that is “Christ centered and Christ governed.” The hope is by so doing there will be a biblical definition and understanding of what church based leadership is about according to scripture. This kind of biblical truth should lead to a self-assessment of how this congregation has understood and practiced church based leadership. This project will help to reject old paradigms of leadership that have no biblical foundation and that encourages embracing celebrity leaders models that determines success by money, attendance and church building. None of these means of measurements have anything to do with the spiritual growth and maturity of those who are in leadership.

One of the goals is by bring an awareness to biblical leadership or leaders in the Bible it will bring to bear how flawed and insignificant men and women in the scriptures where but God still chose to use them in leadership. In spite of the leaders view of him /herself, biblical leadership consistently reveals that leaders God chose are leaders that others would not have chosen even the person God selected did not see leadership potential in him or herself. The choice of leadership is the Lords. It is the intent of this project to assist leaders in seeing just how insignificant leaders in the Bible felt about themselves in light of what God was calling them to do. Therefore, when leaders in this

congregation experience similar self-doubting moments, they will not use that as an excuse of why not to lead but see that they are in the company of great biblical leadership who experience hesitations. This part of leadership development may help to not glamorize biblical leaders but see the humanness of their struggles and challenges.

Lastly, the intent of this project is to cause transformation to the heart that will result in leadership not only seeing beyond tending to the temporal matters of the church but that leadership will be empowered to assist in meeting the needs of the unmet needs of the community where this church is located. By doing this the community will feel that the church cares about its needs more than just for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This type of focus will expand the leader's effectiveness to more than just Lomax but now to the neighborhood surrounding the church.

Some of the questions that will be given to the focus group participants are as follows:

- What does biblical leadership look like
- What are some challenges that biblical leaders face and how did they overcome them
- How can leadership make a difference in the community

The proposed method to test the hypothesis and evaluate the extent to which the expectations have been met is as follows:

- Preach a series of sermons on leadership and leaders God chose and their response to God calling them to lead, the challenges they faced and how they were successful because of God's help.
- Teach Bible Study leadership, take a close look at leaders God choose to use, their response to God choosing them, what challenges these leaders faced and who they were successful because of God's help

- Examine some of the challenges surrounding this context and to take ownership of this community, as the ministry God is sending this leadership too.

### **Methodology**

A qualitative research method was exercised to facilitate this project. The questions developed were to determine the knowledge base of the respondents as it relates to their understanding of biblical leadership to bring about a greater impact not only in a person's life but also the life of the community. Can the understanding of biblical leadership make a difference in the leadership of this church and the leadership of this church make a difference in this community? The collection of data was done using three different methods: pre and post-test surveys, sermons and Bible studies. Pre and post-test were conducted to gather an understanding of respondent's general beliefs when it comes to biblical leadership. Sermons covered persons from the Bible that God used as leaders, such as Moses, Gideon, and Paul. Bibles studies covered the same leaders but focused on the different human struggles that biblical leaders had to overcome with the help of the Lord.

### **Project Calendar**

#### **1. Meet with Context team about kickoff date**

- Review process and expectations

Person Responsible: Pastor Relford

Time Period: March 3/27/2016

2. Hold session to prepare Focus Group Questionnaire for survey

- Brainstorm together for questions
- Make selection
- Prepare the form

Person Responsible: Context Team

Time Period: 4/10/2016

3. Prepare spiritually for the kickoff date

- Prepare sermons
- Plan and prepare Bible studies

Person Responsible: Pastor Relford

Time Period: 4/11/2016 -5/10/2016

4. Establish Focus Group Teams

- Distribute applications
- Conduct interviews
- Make selection of participants

Person Responsible: Context Team

Time Period: 4/11/2016

5. Kickoff Session with Focus Group

- Review over all process
- Address Questions
- Distribute pre-survey questionnaires

Person Responsible: Context Team

Time Period: 5/10/2016

6. Sermon Delivery

Person Responsible: Pastor Relford

Time Period: 5/15/2016

7. Hold Bible Study Sessions on Leadership

Person Responsible: Pastor Relford

Time Period: 5/18/2016 -6/8/2016

8. Hold a Study Session to Examine Challenges Facing Community

Person Responsible: Pastor Relford

Time Period: 6/15/2016-6/22/2016

9. Summarize Findings

- Review surveys
- Compile results
- Present findings

Person Responsible: Context Team

Time Period: 6/28/2016

### **Implementation**

The implementation of this project was a mixed-method approach that included sermons, Bible studies, and a teaching on servant-leadership. Pre-and post-test surveys were conducted to determine if the levels of leadership in this local church could be increased and therefore, cause an increased level of leadership to the community. The hypothesis that has guided this work was as follows: if leadership is empowered through an understanding of the importance and impact of biblical leadership it will not only



result in a change within the individual and the local church but also the environment surrounding the church.

Over the next five-week, twenty five participants were involved in an intense process that acknowledged their comprehension of faith, increased their awareness of the necessity of faith in the formation and fostering of a rededication of their lives to the participation of leadership within the Lomax Temple AME Zion Church. This project presented some obstacles to participants understanding of leadership and the way that leadership had been done for years. The information below is a narrative of the project findings.

The first session was an overview of what would be done over the next four weeks. The pre-test was giving during the first session. The results of the pre-test is given below:

#### Pre-Test

95% of participants have functioned in leadership in secular society be it on their job or some other organizations such as fraternities, sororities, neighborhood associations, boys and girls club etc. Leadership, outside the church, was not foreign to most participants. However, 85% of respondents had never been in leadership within the church. Church leadership was something different for them. Many expressed that they were being asked to do something they had no prior experience about. Of those responding 90% expressed feelings of insignificance or inadequacy as leaders in church context. Of those responding 100% expressed serving in leadership capacities in the workplace came with training before being allowed to do the job. Of those responding 100% shared that they were knowledgeable of the duties and responsibilities of

leadership that is lay out in the AME Zion discipline but they were not as knowledgeable about what scripture says about biblical leadership. They felt competent in talking about the duties and responsibilities from the discipline but not when it came to talking about biblical leadership. Of those responding, 100% shared that they attend worship service on a regular bases. Of those responding, 98% expressed that they do not regularly attend bible study, Sunday school, workshops, and training for spiritual development and growth.

### *Lesson Abstract #1*

#### The Struggle of Biblical Leadership (Moses Makes Excuses Ex. 3:1-13 and 4:1-16)

Moses had personal feelings of being inadequate or insignificant to be their leader. Moses comes up with several excuses why he was not the right person for this job of leadership. The excuses offered by Moses are as follows:

1. First Excuse: Exodus 3:11 Moses said to God "... who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt". Moses seems to lack confidence in himself.
2. Second Excuse: Exodus 3:13 Moses says, " ... Now they may say to me what is His name? What shall I say to them?" Moses seems to be struggling with his faith and his relationship with God. So God says tell the people in verse 14 "... I am has sent me to you."
3. Third Excuse: Exodus 4: 1 "... what if they will not listen believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, the Lord has not appeared to you." Moses questions if the people will listen to him. Which suggest that they may listen to someone else but not him. Exodus 4:2-9 God says they will listen.
4. Fourth Excuse: Exodus 4:10 Moses said to the Lord "Please, Lord I have never been eloquent, nether recently nor in times past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." Moses is hesitant about leadership because of his speech.

5. Fifth Excuse: Exodus 4:13 NIV “ O Lord, please send someone else to do it.” Moses would rather the Lord send one else instead of him. Moses still must go but God is going to send his brother Aaron to help. Exodus 4:14-16.

#### *Survey Questions on Moses Lesson*

1. Have you ever questioned your ability to lead?
2. Have you ever felt inadequate?
3. Do you think there are other people more qualified for leadership in the church than you?
4. Is there something about you that causes you to feel inadequate?
5. Do the feelings of inadequacy cause you to question your ability as a leader?
6. Do you trust God enough to develop you as leader in spite of your inadequacies?

#### *Post test*

All participants stated that they were not aware of all of the excuses that Moses made to God. Of those responding 98% expressed feelings of inadequacy and that they at times lack confidence in themselves as leaders in the church. Of those responding 85% believed that there are others people more qualified than them in church leadership. Just like Moses felt that somebody else like Aaron was better suited for leadership because he could speak well. The post-test revealed that 100% of the respondents said that trusting God for developing a leader was more important than what the leader felt about his or her inadequacy. The respondents were really about to connect with Moses and how he viewed himself. Many of them are like Moses. They just do not see what God sees in them for leadership. Participants express they are trusting God to make them what he see in them.

*Lesson Abstract #2 (1 Cor. 15:5-9) Struggling with the past*

Paul says, “he is unfit to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God” (1 Cor 15:9). Throughout his missionary ministry, Paul repeatedly brings up his past and how he persecuted the church of Jesus Christ. In Acts 26:10-11, he says “I locked up many of the saints in prison, ... when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.” In Galatians 1:13, Paul says to the church “For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.” In First Timothy 1:13, Paul says “... I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor...” In 1 Timothy 1: 15, Paul says, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

Paul does not try to hide his past and the role he played in trying to destroy the church of Jesus Christ. He was always lifting up this negative part of his life as a testimony of his transformation. Paul had been transformed from what he saw in himself from last, least, and untimely born, to an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Questions*

1. Are there things in your past that you wish you had not done?
2. Are there past mistakes that should hinder you from leadership in the church?
3. Do you think that your past mistakes hinder people viewing you a leader?

### *Post-Test*

According to 90% of respondents past shortcomings or mistakes was an expressed area of concern for leadership in the church. Many leaders felt that there was some issue in their past that should have prohibited them from leadership especially if members of the congregation are aware of their past mistakes. The issue was one of not trusting a leader because of his or her past. The preaching and teaching on Paul was particularly helpful in addressing that God does not hold our past against us when choosing who He wants to use. A list was made of other biblical leaders and the mistakes each had made. The take away from this exercise was that there was no biblical leader other than Jesus Christ that was perfect. Everyone named had done something wrong and that could have hindered their leadership. And we as modern leaders in the church we are no different and no better. God still chose to use the leaders in the Bible just like God still chose to use us. The pastor shared with the leadership group the first paper he had to do for the DMin program was a spiritual autobiography and everyone in the program had to do the same. This document shared joys and struggle as well as successes and failures. What was clear through everyone sharing their spiritual autobiographies was that all of us, pastors included have a past that comes with mistakes and flaws. Everyone has a reason why God should not have chosen to use them but God in his infinite wisdom chose to use us anyway.

### *Lesson Abstract #3 Solving Problems with God's help*

Gideon comes into leadership during a time when the Lord delivered Israel into the hands of the Mideanites for seven years. The Mideanites along with the "Amalekites

and the sons of the east” would come into the land of Israel and “destroy the produce of the earth ... and leave no sustenance in Israel as well as no sheep, ox or donkey ... they would come in like locusts” and destroy everything Israel had to sustain herself. The Mideanites are the descendants of Abraham and his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1-3).

The Mideanites are compared to locusts in Judges 6:5. Locusts were known for causing great devastation. “No walls can stop them; no ditches arrest them; fires kindled in their path are forthwith extinguished by the myriads of their dead, ... if a door or window be open, they enter and destroy everything of wood in the house. Every terrace, court and inner chamber is filled with them in moments.”<sup>1</sup> They strip everything green, and every tree till everything is barren. The Midianites, who come into the land of Israel on camels, have the effect on the land as locust. There is nothing left for the people God.

This is the environment and the enemy that Gideon must contend with. It is because of how devastating the enemy is that Gideon, when the angel of the Lord calls him into to leadership, is “threshing wheat in the winepress.” Wheat is not threshed in the wine press. The winepress in a low place or valley. Wheat is to be threshed on a high place on a hill or mountain so that the wind might separate the wheat from shaft. Gideon says of himself and his family in response to God calling him to be used to deal with this the challenge of the Midianites, “Behold my clan is the *weakest* in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family” (Jgs 6:15 RSV). Gideon looks at the enemy or the challenge, the Mideanites, and does not believe that he has what it takes to address this problem. Gideon would eventually do what God had called him to do which was to provide leadership

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<sup>1</sup> Easton Study Bible, “Locust,” accessed June 8, 2016, <http://www.studydrive.net/dictionaries/ebd/>.

during a difficult time and towards a challenging enemy. Gideon would do it because the Lord reassured Gideon that he was with him.

### *Questions*

1. Have you ever faced a challenge that made you fearful?
2. How did you overcome it?
3. Are there huge challenges facing this church?
4. What are some challenges facing this church and this community?

### *Post-Test*

This particular lesson on the challenges that biblical leaders saw as insurmountable caused the leadership of Lomax to look and list challenges facing our local congregation and community. The list revealed some things that the church has been dealing with for years that have never been addressed. Of those responding, 90% expressed that our local church has been overwhelmed at times by challenges. There are some things that look too big for the church to handle. The leadership expressed that God raised up leaders to resolve problems or challenges not to ignore them. Of those responding, 100% revealed that they do not believe we are doing enough as a church to address the needs of the community surrounding the church. Leadership expressed in a majority way that whatever the challenges may be the challenges are not greater than God. It was agreed that in every situation God gave the leader and the people what they needed to overcome what they were facing.

*Lesson Abstract #4 Servant Leadership Model (Robert Greenleaf)*

Who is Robert Greenleaf: Greenleaf was from Terre Haute, India, and spent over thirty-eight years working for the American company AT&T. Greenleaf saw a problem with the authoritarian leadership that was dominant in businesses and organizations throughout the United States. He did not believe it was working, as it should.

Origin of Servant-Leadership: In 1977 Greenleaf wrote a book entitled *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. In this work Greenleaf clearly share his inspiration behind the servant leadership idea. He says he was reading the work of Herman Hesse, *Journey to the East*. Hesse, a German author, wrote the novel about a journey that a group of men made together. Leo, one of the men on the journey, is seen as the servant. Leo disappears and the group of men was unable to finish the journey because Leo the servant is no longer with them. Hesse says that Leo thought he was the servant but in reality Leo was the leader. From reading this novel, Greenleaf received the idea that real leaders are those who serve others first. This concept is the motivation behind everything Greenleaf would later write about servant leadership.

Robert Greenleaf definition of Servant-Leadership: "The servant-leader is servant first ...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice heings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve... after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature...The difference manifests itself in the care served."



### *Questions on servant-leadership*

1. Are there any examples in scripture of servant-leadership in action?
2. Can the servant-leadership model be useful to our church?
3. Can the servant-leadership model impact our immediate community if so in what way?

### *Post-Test*

#### Servant-Leadership Model (Robert Greenleaf)

The entire leadership of Lomax Temple Church had never heard of Robert Greenleaf neither his servant-leadership model. Most assumed the concept came from the bible and would not have thought it was inspired by a non-biblical source. With a clear understanding of the inspiration of this model 100% (25) of the respondents saw a connection to Jesus Christ in the servant-leadership model. Christ was seen as the embodiment of servant-leadership long before Greenleaf coined the expression “servant-leadership. Of those responding 100% (25) not only agreed that servant-leadership is rooted in scripture but the leadership of the church offered passages of scriptures that servant-leadership seemed to be practiced. One of the scripture given by leadership was John 13:1-17. Jesus washing the disciples feet was seen as Christ the leader serving first. He did not see his position as the son of God above his serving others first. It was clear that Christ’s position of leadership in serving first and not being caught up with leading first is a point that local church leaders felt that too often as leaders the focus might be on position and power and not on serving others as being their primary focus. It was also added that who Christ served was not contingent upon what the follower did.

Of those responding, 90% of the leadership of this local church do not believe that at this present time this church is practicing servant leadership whereby serving others comes first. Most of the focus is on herself and maintaining the present structure as well as obligations to the larger denomination. Of those responding, 90% see moving in the direction of servant-leadership is a move in the right direction.

Although most of the focus has not been on servant-leadership to the community this model has challenged the leadership to begin looking at our immediate surroundings and how we can be better servants. Door to door contact to the community has taken place inviting them to opportunities that will provide assistance. Information cards asking for personal information as well as what are some needs that we may be able to provide. The leadership of this church express overwhelmingly that this route allows the church to function as a servant to the community and not a leader that tells the community what the church will offer. By receiving information from the people in the community we take our direction from them.

### **Summary**

Empowerment is an act of sharing power with others. The power shared with the leadership of Lomax Temple AME Zion Church was focused on biblical leaders. Preaching and teaching was conducted by concentrating on ordinary people in the bible that God used for leadership. The challenge was not to glamorizes the people in the biblical text like Moses, Gideon, and Paul but to present them in their humanness, flaws and struggles. By carefully examining not just their victories but their struggles as well

the local leadership of the church was able to see that these biblical people God used in leadership are a lot like most of us God is using in leadership within his church.

This project has been beneficial to this local congregation and to this writer of this work. It has provided a concentration of study and efforts on leadership. The leadership of this congregation attended the five sessions very well. Of the leadership responding 90% attended all sessions. The high attendance from leadership suggest the issue of leadership and how biblical leaders struggles with leadership and their feelings connected with the participants. This project is ongoing and will continue. Five weeks of biblical teaching on leadership has just begun the process of leadership development. This work has been challenging but it has inspired continued opportunities towards leadership development. This project has fostered many conversations that have been centered around leadership. Change has begun within the local leadership of this congregation. However, change does not happen overnight it takes time. Again the work is not over but this project has been instrumental in the beginning of a better leadership at Lomax Temple AME Zion church.

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